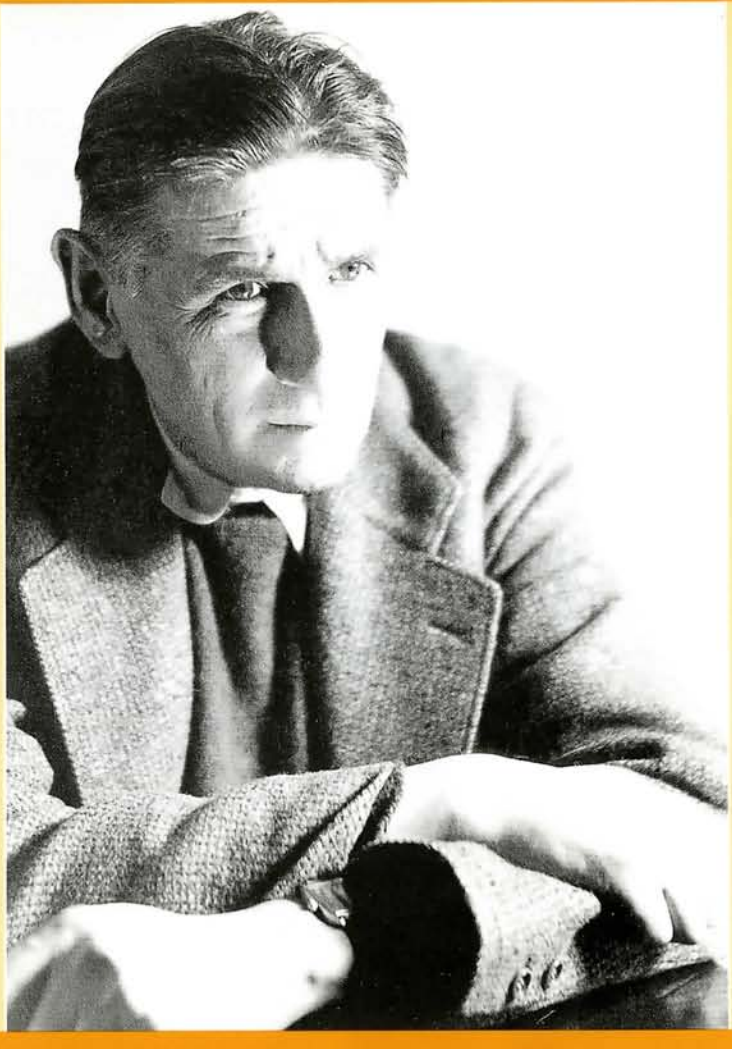
Hermann Broch, Visionary in Exile



The 2001 Yale Symposium

EDITED BY PAUL MICHAEL LÜTZELER
in cooperation with Matthias Konzett, Willy Riemer, and Christa Sammons

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CAMDEN HOUSE

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To Sachiko Broch de Rothermann
with thanks and in admiration

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Editor's Preface

THE YEAR 2001 MARKED the fiftieth anniversary of Hermann Broch's death. The author died of a heart attack on May 30, 1951, in New Haven, Connecticut, where he had spent the last two years of his life. Ten months before his death he had been named an Honorary Lecturer in German at Yale University. His friend, Hermann Weigand, a professor of German at Yale University, had helped him attain this position. Weigand had written the first scholarly study on Broch's novel *Der Tod des Vergil,* a gesture the author appreciated. Since Broch knew at the time that, due to his precarious health, he probably would die in the near future, he asked his friends at Yale as well as his publisher and his relatives — his son and his wife — to establish the Broch Archives at the Yale University Library after his death. His son, H. F. (Armand) Broch de Rothermann; his wife, Annemarie Meier-Graefe; his friends, Hannah Arendt, Erich von Kahler, Hermann Weigand, Curt von Faber du Faur, and others saw to it that the Broch estate found a proper home in the Beinecke Rare Collection of the Yale University Library.

Hundreds of scholars have visited New Haven during the last half-century to carry out research on Broch at Beinecke. During the last three decades Christa Sammons, Curator of the German Collection at Beinekke, has been a most able administrator of the Broch Archives. Not only has she expanded the collection over the years, it is also thanks to her that international Broch conferences took place in New Haven in 1979, 1986, and in 2001. In all three cases the Yale University German Department played an important role; this support is due in part to the fact that Christa Sammons's husband, Jeffrey Sammons, is a prominent faculty member of this department. Although not a Broch scholar himself (his area of expertise is nineteenth-century realism), he has shared the burden of running the Broch conferences. His friendship to the late Armand Broch de Rothermann played a role in his enthusiasm for the Broch conferences as well. The chairpersons of this department have also contributed to the success of these events: in 1979 Peter Demetz, in 1986 Ingeborg Glier, and in 2001 Brigitte Peucker. In 1986 it was Stephen Dowden, then a faculty member at Yale, who shared the burden with Christa Sammons and who edited the proceedings of that fine symposium.

Some years ago I first discussed the idea of another Yale symposium with Christa Sammons and Sachiko Broch de Rothermann. We agreed to arrange it during the spring of 2001 to commemorate Broch's death fifty years previously. Willy Riemer, a former Yale student and now a professor of German at the University of Delaware, and Matthias Konzett, an assistant professor at the Yale German Department (both experts in twentieth-century Austrian literature), contributed their ideas. They also helped with the preparatory phase and with the collection and copy-editing of the contributions to this volume. Many thanks to both.

We agreed on the title *Visionary in Exile*. Broch's ambition was not only to analyze past and present times but also to foresee the course of history. With many of his contributions to the fields of literature (especially to the novel), philosophy of history, and the theory of human rights and of democracy, Broch belonged to the avant-garde of his time. He was a man of vision and extraordinary insights into the human psyche as well as into political constellations. Broch led an exilic, nomadic and diasporic existence, and his writings are filled with the motifs of the *peregrinus,* of farewell and a hoped-for arrival, of "Abschied" and "Heimkehr." Exile was part of his existence long before he was forced to flee from Austria in 1938 in the wake of the "Anschluß." His Jewish upbringing, his acculturation in multicultural Vienna, his deep interest in religions in general and in Catholicism specifically, his active participation in the cosmopolitan literature and thought of an enlightened and secularized European society — all this made him immune against the totalitarian movements of the time, to which many an intellectual fell victim. Vision and exile are the two characteristics of his life and work directly and indirectly addressed during the Yale symposium; they are the major themes of the contributions in this volume. With his exilic existence, Broch has remained a contemporary in an age of mass migrations (due to wars, economic disasters, ethnic fights, cultural conflicts, and political upheavals). In these times of global dangers, we need intellectuals with moral integrity and political visions of the caliber of Hermann Broch.

All but three of the scholars we had invited were able to come to New Haven during the symposium weekend (April 27–29, 2001). Since we did not want to miss out on the contributions of these three scholars, we decided to have a follow-up to the Yale symposium at a MLA special session on Broch that same year (during the annual meeting in New Orleans, December 29, 2001). The topic was the same, and some of contributors to the Yale symposium were able to attend. We have integrated the three papers of the MLA session (by Ruth Kluger, Wolfgang

Müller-Funk, and Peter Yoonsuk Paik) into this volume, since in so many ways it was an extension of the Yale symposium.

Unless otherwise noted, sources of quotations from Broch throughout this volume come from the *Kommentierte Werkausgabe* that I edited between 1974 and 1981, published by Suhrkamp in Frankfurt am Main. The abbreviation used is (KW) followed by the number of the volume and the page number: KW1: *Die Schlafwandler* (1978), KW2: *Die Unbekannte Größe* (1977), KW3: *Die Verzauberung* (1976), KW4: *Der Tod des Vergil* (1976), KW5: *Die Schuldlosen* (1974), KW6: *Novellen. Prosa. Fragmente* (1980), KW7: *Dramen* (1979), KW8: *Gedichte* (1980), KW9/1: *Schriften zur Literatur. Kritik* (1975), KW9/2: *Schriften zur Literatur. Theorie* (1975), KW10/1: *Philosophische Schriften. Kritik* (1977), KW10/2: *Philosophische Schriften. Theorie* (1977), KW11: *Politische Schriften* (1978), KW12: *Massenwahntheorie* (1979), KW13/1: *Briefe 1908–1938* (1981), KW13/2: *Briefe 1938–1945* (1981), KW13/3: *Briefe 1945–1951* (1981).

The volume offers new studies on Broch the critic and on Broch the novelist/dramatist. Broch was a first-rate theoretician in the fields of aesthetics, mass psychology, politics, philosophy of history, and the theory of values. At the same time, he made his name as one of the leading European novelists of the twentieth century. The contributors to this volume deal with Broch's major theoretical essays in these different fields as well as with his novels and his dramas. After fifty years of Broch research, with many conferences and countless publications on the author, there is no sign of fatigue in Broch scholarship. The author seems to be a contemporary of every student generation; as Kathleen Komar remarks in her article, all the new pertinent humanities discourses of the last decades seem to find their forerunner in Broch. The contributing scholars belong to different generations and teach in different countries: they are in their thirties, forties, fifties, sixties, and seventies; they reside in Germany, Austria, Italy, Canada, Japan, and the United States. Broch scholarship is alive and well and has its representatives in all the continents of the globe. The Yale symposium was followed by three more Broch conferences in 2001: one in Vienna (organized by Marianne Gruber), one in Stuttgart (presided over by Michael Kessler), and one in Tokyo (arranged by Koichi Yamaguchi). As a result of these symposia, the *Internationale Arbeitskreis Hermann Broch* was founded that year, an organization that lists 110 scholars as members.

Our heart-felt thanks go to Sachiko Broch de Rothermann, to whom this volume is dedicated. She always takes time out to support Broch-related endeavors. It is thanks to her that the H. F. Broch de Rother-

mann Memorial Fund was established at the Beinecke Library at Yale University, a fund that has already supported a number of Broch scholars doing research in the Broch Archives. This publication was also supported with income from the same fund. Furthermore, I would like to express my gratitude to Christa Sammons and to praise her for her many continued activities in improving the Broch Archives at Yale, a task far beyond the call of duty.

Paul Michael Lützeler
St. Louis, Spring 2002

Introduction: Broch, Our Contemporary

Paul Michael Lützeler

I

In 1950 — one year before his death — Hermann Broch was nominated for the Nobel Prize in literature by the Austrian P.E.N. Club. Broch did not receive the award; it went to William Faulkner and Bertrand Russell. Thirty years later one of Hermann Broch's Viennese friends, the one-generation-younger Elias Canetti, received the Nobel Prize for Literature. In his acceptance speech Canetti paid homage to those writers who had influenced him most: Karl Kraus, Franz Kafka, Robert Musil, and Hermann Broch. Canetti stressed that in a way he was accepting the distinguished award as a proxy for these four writers, who had not been awarded the prize. Canetti's statement was meant as more than an empty gesture: it was a show of respect for the authors who were hardly acknowledged during their lifetimes, yet without whom a literary work such as his own would have developed differently. It was Broch who was the first to take Canetti under his wing. As early as 1933, two years before Canetti's debut, *Die Blendung* was published, Broch, who was a friend to many, introduced the then twenty-eight-year-old, as yet unknown, author in a speech to the Viennese audience as one of the hopefuls of contemporary Austrian literature. In those days Broch and Canetti also discussed what might be done against the spreading mass hysteria that was arising in the wake of Fascism and National Socialism. These talks spawned the plans for their books *Massenwahntheorie* and *Masse und Macht,* written in exile during the Second World War.

Canetti, Broch, Musil, and Kafka do not have only their Austrian cultural background in common; they also share the fate of having been discovered only late in life. During his lifetime, Kafka was known only to a small circle of literati in Prague and Vienna; Musil's embitterment at the lack of resonance accorded his *Mann ohne Eigenschaften* is a well-known fact; Hermann Broch was not "discovered" until after his death, and Canetti was in his sixties when international fame caught up with him.

The boost in Broch reception in the German-speaking countries would not have been thinkable without the echo that his books first had in England and America. While between 1933 and 1945 there was no market in Germany for Broch's books on account of the political and economic situation, they enjoyed a strong resonance in the Anglo-Saxon countries. While Aldous Huxley became a Broch proponent in England (in 1932 he called Broch the only credible writer in the German language), in America it was a young Thornton Wilder tried to convince his American friends of the quality of the *Schlafwandler* trilogy. When Broch was arrested in Austria in 1938 and forced into exile, his translators Edwin and Willa Muir came to his aid in Scotland, and renowned cultural institutions supported Broch in the U.S. It was also American and exiled European intellectuals who edited, in cooperation with publisher Daniel Brody, the first Broch edition in the 1950s: Hanna Arendt published the essays, Erich von Kahler the poems, Robert Pick the letters, and Hermann J. Weigand *Die Schuldlosen*. This first, ten-volume edition, published by the Swiss Rhein-Verlag, also laid the foundation for Broch's fame in Germany during the mid 1950s. Although not complete, it nevertheless represented a worthy undertaking and spared Broch the fate to which the National Socialists wanted to condemn exile literature: to be destroyed and forgotten.

It was above all the novels *Die Schlafwandler* and *Der Tod des Vergil* that were much read in the 1950s, at the same time becoming a topic of discussion among literary scholars. With these demanding, experimental, and unconventional works Broch established himself as a member of the modern avant-garde, and this was exactly what readers wanted to explore after years of dictatorially ordered provinciality.

In the 1950s and 1960s literary criticism recognized the central role that Broch had played for the modern novel; in retrospect *Germanistik* was able to pin-point the novelist's place in a group of writers whose innovative narrative approaches had opened up additional fields of a psychic, philosophical, and socio-critical nature for the avant-garde novel. Broch was now seen as related to James Joyce, André Gide, Robert Musil, Aldous Huxley, and Alfred Döblin. While this new categorization of his work certainly brought with it a rise in Broch reception, it also limited its effect, for it supplied a label that seemed to define him: that of the avant-garde novelist. Any aspects of Broch's work that did not fit into this category went largely unnoticed.

The middle of the 1970s brought a revival of the human rights discussion and propagation. Broch's contributions on the human rights theory, which so far had gone unnoticed, were now included in the

discussion. Political scientists such as Anton Pelinka and publicists such as Harry Pross came to the fore and pointed out the importance of Broch's essays. In Denmark his essays led to a public debate and inspired leading intellectuals, as for instance Villy Soerensen who published the political book *Revolt from the Center*. In Norway the director of Amnesty International, Sverry Dahl, published an essay in which he reiterated that the convictions to which the members of Amnesty International adhere had already been outlined and formulated by Broch in the 1940s.

The peace research of the Eighties also saw in Broch a predecessor of sorts. Similarly to Günther Anders, Broch had, as early as 1945, envisioned the extent to which the atomic bomb would become a threat to humanity and had written against nuclear armament. Between 1945 and 1950, decades before the 1970s and 1980s when peace research became a recognized, scientific discipline, Broch wrote several studies on conflict resolution following his essays on the human rights debate. A year before Churchill's famous Iron Curtain speech Broch predicted the East-West conflict and sketched scenarios of the crisis that would result from the juxtaposition of a *Pax Americana* and a *Pax Moscovita*.

Broch research of the last decades had not taken a turn away from the writer to the political theoretician; Broch the writer was not forgotten. However, now also those of his writings that had so far been ignored, as for instance his dramas, began to find an audience. Broch would certainly have had the capacity of becoming a successful dramatist, had Hitler's coming to power in 1933 and Austria's *Anschluß* in 1938 not prevented this. Broch wrote his first dramatic work in 1932 and titled it *Die Entsühnung*. It is a socio-critical drama that depicts how, during the economic crisis of 1930, a German industrialist tricks medium-sized businesses into competing with and eventually ruining each other, which enables him to incorporate them subsequently and profitably into his own enterprise. In a manner that demonstrates his familiarity with and knowledge of the various problems, Broch delineates the conflicts of the industrialists among each other, the intermeshing of finance and politics, and the fight of the unions. Broch's *Entsühnung* is situated in the tradition of the business and industry dramas of the so-called New Objectivism (Neue Sachlichkeit). Broch presents a cross-section of the social classes in the years shortly before Hitler's coming to power. The industrialists include monopolists or owners of big corporations, the established entrepreneurs from the *Gründerzeit* with their old nineteenth-century ethics; additionally there are the matter-of-fact technocrats and managers who are obsessed with the smooth running of the enterprise; furthermore, the smaller business owners who see their salva-

tion in merging with a large company; and finally there are those economic leaders who are waiting for the strong man of the Nationalists who is to shore up the framework that will give a boost to the economic situation in general. There are similar differentiations on the side of the workers. In the Germany of 1930 Communists, Social Democrats and Unionists are competing for power. Between these fronts one finds political intellectuals (that is, from the extreme left as well as the extreme right) as well as independent minds. The crisis year of 1930 is the year of the Brüning Emergency Act, of business failures and of four million unemployed. As much as it is possible at all to do so in a drama, the year 1930 is portrayed and analyzed in Broch's drama in its chaotic, socio-economic complexity. The economic crisis that had started a few months earlier in the U.S. hit Germany in 1930 with full force. Overwhelming unemployment and constant waves of bankruptcies, however, are worrisome crisis indicators even today. It is thus no coincidence that in 1994 — sixty years after its Zurich premiere in 1934 — this drama was once again staged in that city. In both cases the performances were received favorably. It is interesting to note how Broch has juxtaposed the world of men and women in this drama: while the men fall victim to ideological whims and are unable to reach any synthesis of reason, understanding, and sensitivity, the women, on the other hand, are capable of doing so. This is particularly evident in the epilogue with which the drama leaves the naturalistic realm.

Shortly after the performance of *Die Entsühnung* in 1934 Broch wrote a comedy titled *Aus der Luft gegriffen oder Die Geschäfte des Baron Laborde,* in which he treated the same aspects as he had in his tragedy, i.e., questionable business practices and stock market maneuvers. The Baron, an ingenious confidence man, manages to simulate the founding of an oil company, subsequently making most dubious deals with petroleum that has actually never been produced. In parts the comedy reads like a satire on the peculiar practices of certain oil companies of today, whose giant gains are called, appropriately, "windfall profits." The piece enriched the comedy-poor German literature, at the same time providing evidence of Broch's obvious dramatic talent. While the comedy was not performed during Broch's lifetime, it was successfully staged in the Eighties and Nineties in, among other places, Vienna, Berlin, and Paris. The course of action is reversed here: While the tragedy begins hopefully and energetically but ends in the suicide of several of its protagonists, the comedy starts out with an unsuccessful suicide attempt but ends in harmony. The senselessness of a business mechanism that has become autonomous is demonstrated in both works. In the last analysis one can

explain both of Broch's dramas from his own philosophy, that is, his theory of the disintegration of values. Here Broch cites the unconnectedness of the various segments of society and the loss of a central value. However, in contrast to conservative thinkers, Broch does not long for the value system of earlier periods in European history. The performance of Broch's comedy was noted by the majority of the press, and from the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* to the journal *Theater heute* it was agreed that Broch had written an excellent work that was bound to experience many more performances. Broch's one-act-play version of *Die Erzählung der Magd Zerline* from the novel *Die Schuldlosen* became an international theater success in the 1980s. Especially Jeanne Moreau was brilliant in the role of Zerline. A quarter century earlier she had played the female lead in Michelangelo Antonioni's 1961 movie *La Notte*. The center part of this film depicts a party given by the millionaire family Gherardini in Milan. Broch's novel *I Sonnambuli* (*Die Schlafwandler*) functions repeatedly as a *leitmotiv*. The Pontanos who have grown apart (with Marcello Mastroianni as Giovanni and Jeanne Moreau as Lidia) find Broch's trilogy in a niche in the vestibule after entering the millionaire's villa. Giovanni, the intellectual and well-known writer, wonders who in this nouveau-riche family, which is not known for its intellectual prowess, could have thought of reading such a book. Sitting at the foot of the stairs of the entrance hall and reading the Broch book, Valentina is observed by Lidia who reports this to Giovanni. Giovanni is curious about the pretty young woman and believes that he has fallen in love with her. He makes amorous advances toward her and with *I Sonnambuli* in hand Valentina asks him jokingly whether they might get to know each other better while reading the work together. But nothing comes of the flirtation: Valentina confesses that she is unable to fall in love. The loss of human ties, the feeling of alienation, the emptiness of everyday city life, the isolation of the intellectuals: these are all themes which Broch's trilogy and Antonioni's movie have in common. A similarly direct, although differently intended, ironic allusion to Broch's *Schlafwandler* is found in one of the better-known contemporary American novels, that is, in William Gaddis' extensive volume *JR* of 1975. One of the minor figures in the novel is the sculptor and painter Schepperman, a psychologically unstable artist from whose unpredictable flights into anger people around him must be protected. A friend reports that, while Schepperman had one of his attacks of uncontrollable rage, he read to Schepperman from Hermann Broch's *Die Schlafwandler,* the only means by which the difficult artist could be calmed down. A more complimentary intertextual reference to this novel can be found in Thomas Bernhard's *Auslöschung,* in which the

second part of Broch's trilogy (*Esch oder die Anarchie*) is included in the list of books the narrator believes he could not do without. The writers of the generation of the Group 47 knew and respected especially the "Esch" part of Broch's trilogy, as Günter Grass, Martin Walser, Wolfgang Koeppen, and Paul Nizon assured me in several conversations. But a younger author like Peter Handke has also created an intertextual connection to Broch's novel in his short story "Langsame Heimkehr." In both works the topic of "redemption" plays a central role.

Albert Einstein and C. G. Jung noted in their letters how existentially they were touched by *Der Tod des Vergil;* and during the 1950s the then influential Paris critic Maurice Blanchot discovered this novel for the avant-garde of the French intellectual youth. In this context one might mention particularly his book *Le livre à venir*. The most important gift, James Miller states in *The Passion of Michel Foucault* (1993), that Blanchot gave the students and friends Michel Foucault and Jean Barraqué, was the respect that he had felt for *Der Tod des Vergil*. For the avant-garde composer Barraqué Broch's novel turned into a life-long obsession. His unfinished work *Le temps restitué* (available since 1966) was inspired by Broch's novel and is considered his most important work. Foucault, too, was extraordinarily interested in *Der Tod des Vergil*.

Broch's novels represent attempts at the permanent poetic expansion of constraints: while they are still rooted in modern literature, they also already contain elements that were fully developed in the postmodern. This is evident when one compares, for instance, Christoph Ransmayr's postmodern novel *Die letzte Welt* with Broch's work. V. S. Naipaul finds a noteworthy intertextual reflection of Broch's *Tod des Vergil* in the 1987 novel *The Enigma of Arrival*. This postcolonial author, son of an Indian family from Trinidad, has been living in England since 1950 and is an expert in the modern European novel. In the second chapter he reports that he had once intended writing a dream-like story that had been inspired by an early surrealist painting by Giorgio de Chirico titled "The Enigma of Arrival." The painting contains classical-Roman, Mediterranean motifs in half-antique, half-modern surroundings. On the basis of this painting Naipaul's story was to be located in the Antiquity of the Mediterranean region and was to depict the arrival of a person by ship in a harbor characterized by utter desolation. While the traveler would at first be taken in by the hustle and bustle of the city, he would soon succumb to feelings of panic and senselessness, of agony and death. Naipaul wrote that he would certainly find inspiration for the themes of travel and sea in Virgil's work. The question arises whether Naipaul's idea would have been possible without Broch's *Tod des Vergil,* the first

chapter of which is titled "Wasser — Die Ankunft." Coincidentally Broch was also an admirer of Chirico's work and probably knew of his "Enigma of Arrival." In 1946 he had expressed the desire for a picture of this kind for the cover of his Virgil novel.

II

The death of modernity at the end of the bourgeois era, the collapse of a totalizing rationality that organized society, the increasing loss of sense: these symptoms of destruction and dissolution which such French contemporary theoreticians as Jean Baudrillard, Jacques Derrida, and Jean-François Lyotard have diagnosed and analyzed, are already in evidence in Broch's work. Broch's oeuvre, the most important part of which was written in the two decades between 1930 and 1950, documents like hardly any other from the first half of the twentieth century the crisis of modernity.

With his first novel, *Die Schlafwandler,* the author oriented himself, as far as the poetological concept is concerned, by one of the fundamental studies on modern aesthetics, i.e., Georg Lukács's *Theorie des Romans.* Broch's essay "Zerfall der Werte," which was incorporated in the *Schlafwandler* novel, is a theory — inspired by Max Weber and continued by Niklas Luhmann and Pierre Bourdieu — of the differentiation and autonomization as well as of the self-referentiality of the partial social systems. In the "Epilog" of *Die Schlafwandler* Broch inaugurated — thus striving beyond the diagnosis of decline — what Lukács had postulated as the task of the modern novel: to delineate the contours of a new cosmology in the age of "transcendental homelessness." Yet this aesthetic goal already runs through the narrative parts of the novel. Upon closer inspection one realizes that the three parts of the book, with their protagonists Pasenow, Esch, and Huguenau, are intended as a satire of precisely that typology of the novel that Lukács describes in "The Theory of the Novel." The poetically conceived and philosophically reflected social and spiritual disintegration, deconstruction, discontinuity, decomposition, demystification, detotalization, and delegitimization in the "Schlafwandler" are juxtaposed at the end of the trilogy with Broch's attempt to explore new possibilities in the sense of integration, construction, unity, continuity, cohesion, and legitimization. While at the writing of his novel Broch is still rooted in the modern, i.e., he takes the individual artist's task seriously, namely to enable, after the destruction of overarching paradigms of meaning, the subjective construction of meaning through writing, he has also already entered the realm of postmodern deconstruction.

Social scientists and historians like Eric W. Voegelin and Gordon A. Craig have pointed to the relevance of *Die Schlafwandler* in respect to understanding modern European history. The interest in Broch's novels continues unabated: a number of well-known authors such as the Mexican Carlos Fuentes, the American Susan Sontag, the Indian Khushwant Singh, the Czech Milan Kundera, the Swiss Paul Nizon, the German Günter Herburger, and the Austrian Barbara Frischmuth, have all stated that they were spurred on in their own poetic endeavors by Broch's novels. Frischmuth found inspiration for her *Demeter* trilogy (*Herrin der Tiere, Über die Verhältnisse, Einander Kind*) in Broch's novel *Die Verzauberung*. In his essays, lectures and interviews — whether in France, America or Israel — Milan Kundera never passes up the opportunity to mention Broch as one of the leading writers of the twentieth century. In Ernst-Wilhelm Händler's 1997 novel *Fall* Broch is mentioned numerous times and his relationship to Musil and Canetti is discussed.

In *Die Schlafwandler* Broch defines "die Entropie des Menschen" as "seine absolute Vereinsamung." This metaphorical use of "entropy" (a term from thermodynamics) is common among writers of the modern (such as Ralph Waldo Emerson) as well as with those of the postmodern (for example, Thomas Pynchon). Just as it is the rule, according to the second thermodynamic theorem, that each physically closed system originates from a maximum of order, only to approach thermal death in a tendency toward increasing disorder (with entropy representing the degree by which to measure this disorder), so modernists and postmodernists occupy themselves with the problem of the increasing fragmentation and confusion of social and cultural systems. In Broch's theory "Zerfall der Werte" entropy signals, in this sense, the degree of the continuous disintegration of cultural, social, and philosophical unity. All of Hermann Broch's work is directed at the poetic, philosophical, and essayistic grasp of the "Entropie des Menschen."

Broch's second novel, *Die Unbekannte Größe,* has garnered less attention. Broch himself classified it repeatedly as a work of secondary importance. However, the book is of interest in that here one finds the singular case of a novelistic discussion of the crisis in the basic research in theoretical physics of the late 1920s (quantum theory). This small novel may have been written rather conventionally, but its main theme deals with one of the great upheavals in the physical thinking of the modern.

Die Verzauberung (1935) is a document of the literary modern as well. While working on the book Broch recognizes how difficult, if not impossible, it is to achieve in antifascist literature the effect the avant-

garde intends, that is the conveyance of art into practical life (Peter Bürger). Broch believes that he has turned a dead corner with this work. He abandons the literary modern, foregoes writing novels, and turns, for the time being, to political publications that he considers to be further-reaching.

Unwittingly, however, he succeeds in creating, from his novelistic beginnings at the end of the 1930s, a meta-literary book, a novel on the novel, which he publishes in 1945 under the title *Der Tod des Vergil.* There, as in *Die Schlafwandler,* he maintains his connection to modernity. But it is no longer a matter of discerning the parameters of a new cosmology, a new myth, a future "transcendental shelter." Instead, the search for a new unified value system becomes the very subject of the novel. The actual theme of the book is — as the title indicates — that of death itself, of the border between life and death, of what can be expressed and what can only be surmised, of the realm between the Here and the There. With this work Broch wishes to approach what lies "jenseits der Sprache" (as is stated at the end of the novel); he attempts — similarly to what Derrida defined as "différance" — to comprehend the "nothing" that gives everything its start; he is focused on what cannot be expressed and what remains "uncontemplated" by philosophy, because it cannot be "grasped" and "controlled" rationally. With this attempt to surpass the borders of the modern novel, Broch creates an original form of the "lyrical" novel with a particular form of syntax. In this endeavor such modernistic works as James Joyce's *Ulysses* — which had previously been of decisive importance for him — could no longer serve him as models.

Broch's last book, the "Roman in elf Erzählungen" *Die Schuldlosen,* of 1950, can be viewed as a continuation of the direction Broch had taken in *Der Tod des Vergil.* While the "Parabel," the "Stimmen," and the tales are in tune with each other and skillfully composed, they are nevertheless of a fragmentary character, are open and no longer indebted to the aesthetics of totality. Above all this novel is a book of exile, and the exile motifs are stressed by the author, especially in the "Stimmen 1933." The isolation, exile, and outsider aspect of Broch's theory and prose writings is also present here in the manner in which he views religion. In the no man's land between conservative dogmatism and diverse substitute religions Broch walks a path that leads him less to religion as such than to a faith "per se" and to a new ethics concept. One might speak of a change of the religious paradigms, as far as Broch is concerned, in that his theory of the "Irdisch Absolute" favors an anthropologization of religion.

How deeply Broch's poetic and political engagement are intertwined is obvious in all of his works. For Broch, literature was never a means in itself. Cultural criticism, poetic writing, letters, political essays, and mass psychology are the means used alternately or simultaneously for ethical affect. Broch never assumed that his works would be successful in his day; indeed he was downright suspicious of immediate success. Instead, he put his trust in a — one might say — homeopathic dispensation that would show its effect over time. It is safe to say that Broch's specific position between the extremes is most evident in his political theories. During the 1940s he propagated — informed by ideas of the New Deal and in opposition to the Cold War — a kind of historic compromise between Capitalism and Socialism: the democracy of the "third way." Still, he did not see even this third way as dogma; rather, his interest was directed at the achievement of social justice, the establishment and protection of human rights, the peaceful solution of conflicts, and the prevention of what he called "historische Fehlsituationen," that is, situations that arise in history but are set up in such a way that they must fail. Such "Fehlsituationen" par excellence were, in his opinion, the result of National Socialism and Stalinism. Because of their vision, clarity, and ethical direction Broch's political writings are as important today as they were in his lifetime. This was borne out when, after the war in Kosovo had ended, the young Serb dramatist Ana Miljanovic wrote and directed a drama in Belgrade that had its foundation in Broch's *Briefe über Deutschland 1945–1949,* i.e., the author's correspondence with Volkmar von Zühlsdorff. Miljanovic recognized a parallel between the question of Germany's guilt and its isolation after the Second World War and Serbia's similar situation after a series of war actions in the Balkans.

I.
Hermann Broch
The Critic

Kitsch and Art: Broch's Essay "Das Böse im Wertsystem der Kunst"

Ruth Kluger

I

I WOULD LIKE TO SKETCH a problem, show how Broch deals with it, and then place his solution within a contemporary context and argue that his views remain of importance today, in spite of their partially political origin in the thirties.

The German word Kitsch, of uncertain origin, is an invention of the late nineteenth century, while the thing itself, I would argue, goes back to the late eighteenth. There was certainly "bad" art before, but it was the art of the dilettante, works that fell short of perfection. Taste was synonymous with good taste, "bad," that is, corrupted taste wasn't a problem. If you were well educated you had taste, and if you weren't educated you weren't likely to have opinions on these matters anyway. Folk art was looked down on, and was only raised to the level of respectability at a time when commercial art was already a problem.

We all know what kitsch is and, let's admit it, we have all fallen for it, at least as children, when we were more vulnerable to being manipulated, but later on too, I should say. We all point to it when we recognize it and we mock it, but when it comes to defining, circumscribing it, we are more apt to give egregious examples than to zooming in on its essence. When we are pressed for the characteristics of kitsch, we are apt to say, it is epigonal, imitative. My objection to this is, "Yes, but so is high art, and often high art isn't even an imitation of nature but an imitation of other art, just like kitsch." For when we say that works of art stand in a tradition we mean that in some ways they are imitative. Or you might say, kitsch doesn't endure the test of time. But that's not a criterion we can use, for it means that we have to wait to dismiss a work until it's old enough to have been forgotten. Moreover, some literature, that is generally excluded from the canon of high art, does last. In German the books of Karl May and Ludwig Ganghofer are examples.

Nor are all works of mass appeal kitsch. Just think of the mass appeal of some very good movies. Or the mass appeal — now lasting exactly one hundred years and no end in sight — of Thomas Mann's *Buddenbrooks.* Kitsch strikes us as false, phony, mendacious, built on pretense. But isn't all theater pretense, role playing? How do we pin down the difference? Moreover, the great themes of ancient tragedy, family conflicts to the death, incest, mistaken identities, heroic or willful disobedience: all these are also the stuff of which kitsch novels are made, not to mention movies. So how do you distinguish? The themes can't be the difference. We help ourselves by judging each specific instance, but the question here is how we distinguish the categories.

And yet the problem is a central one within the purview of aesthetic judgment. For kitsch is not badly made art, art with shortcomings. Kitsch has a different purpose than high art and, if successful, it is often very well made and fulfills that purpose as a product, as a piece of merchandise. And so I turn to Broch. Broch argued in his 1933 essay "Das Böse im Wertsystem der Kunst" (KW9/2,119–56) that the difference between "Kunst und Kitsch" was not simply a question of degree, but of kind. (Many Americans argue that it's a matter of degree, but Germans go in for dialectics in these matters, and so did Broch.) To him art and kitsch were radical opposites, like good and evil. Art, he argues, attempts to interpret the world for us, the world in which we live and the world for which we hope. He'll have none of the self-enclosed realm of art, whether it be art for art's sake or a literature inspired by doubts on the nature of language and its ability to relate to reality. He uses a concept of "extended naturalism" ("erweiterter Naturalismus") which has room for abstract painters and surreal poets, but always points us to something outside its own limits.

Broch's Essay "Das Böse im Wertsystem der Kunst" reflects the urgency of the political upheaval of the thirties. If put this way, it might appear as if it were mainly of historical interest. To pin together ethics and aesthetics, after the modernist movement had painstakingly and painfully liberated art from the confines of bourgeois morality — what could be more of a throwback to notions that sophisticated minds had thoroughly debunked? But actually, out of his admittedly limited historical situation, Broch tackled problems of aesthetic evaluation that no one before him had considered worthwhile and, I might add, no one after him approached with such a radical consistency. Hannah Arendt was right when she said in her introduction to his works: "[. . .] wer vor ihm hat diese Frage [des Kitschproblems] in der ihr gebührenden Schärfe und Tiefe auch nur gesehen?"

Broch begins in medias res with the assertion that throughout history artistic production mirrored and expressed the *zeitgeist,* that it was an embodiment of a value system. Broch's theory gives us a view of conflicting value systems, each of them autonomous and each of them with its own highest good. He sees them striving to interfere with one another by encroaching on each other's autonomy. For example, the political value system imposing itself on the aesthetic value system will be inimical to the production of true works of art and will produce instead dreary socialist or fascist or blatantly patriotic works. Or: the highest good of the commercial system is the maximization of profit. If that is imposed on the aesthetic system, a foreign element enters that is detrimental to aesthetic values. In a truly coherent society, all these value systems are subsumed under an overarching one which pulls them together. But we live in a time of disintegration, a time of "Zerfall der Werte" (KW1,418ff.).

Especially since the First World War, a devastating decline of traditional values had set in. Broch's view of his world is in many ways apocalyptic. According to an encyclopedic definition, the authors of apocalyptic literature believe that the present age of the world is irredeemably evil, ruled by a Satan figure who personifies evil. These authors reveal, however, that the evil age is soon to be ended, destroyed by God, who is good.

There was a kind of secular Gnosticism going round in Europe that inspired other writers of the time as well. Think of W. B. Yeats' famous lines from his poem "The Second Coming"

> Things fall apart; the center cannot hold;
> Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world.
> The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
> The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
> The best lack all conviction, while the worst
> Are full of passionate intensity.

The evil rulers are analogous to the Anti-Christ of Christian traditions. The term antichrist was ascribed to a false claimant of the characteristics and attributes of Christ. The "false Christs" were predicted by Jesus in Matthew 24 in a prophecy of great tribulations to come. Jesus preached: "Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo here is Christ or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Broch's tempter in his novel *Die Verzauberung* is such a false prophet, while Yeats conjures up a mythological beast that

"slouches towards Bethlehem to be born," a beast that is surely akin to the various beasts in the Revelation of John of Patmos.

So the First World War meant the collapse of a value system and, since Broch was not given to wallowing in pessimism, the question of how to build a new one. He stipulates that death is the ultimate antithesis of value ("der Tod als Unwert"), whereas true value is life-assertive. Again, consider that the fourth and most terrible rider of the Apocalypse in *Revelation* is the one on the pale horse who is Death. (These images have a curious resonance today, when Islamic terrorists proclaim that they seek death as the ultimate value, and despise us, Americans and the West, because we live for life's sake.) But life overcomes in the end: *Revelation,* the last book of the Bible, contains a promise that death will be conquered. Broch claims art, music in particular, gives us a sense of life everlasting, an "Abbild der absoluten Todeserlösung," an image of the absolute redemption from death. Hence the apocalyptic passion with which he defends the value of art.

To Broch goodness and beauty are complementary. The ultimate value in ethics is goodness, and in aesthetics it is beauty. Yet in time and history, that is, in our circumscribed lives, the ultimate cannot be achieved, all values are relative, though all value systems attempt to transcend these limits of relativity. The true artist or the honest artisan must concentrate on the work in hand, attempt to work well, to make an artifact that is an excellent sample of its kind. Beauty will be there if he (no she involved) is successful. On the other hand, the kitsch author or artist attempts to get at beauty straight, to have it neat, as it were, without the detour of the well-made work. Analogously, a sentimental person, a "Kitschmensch" to Broch, might try to get at goodness without moral activity, so that his/her efforts would be a mere pretense of ethical behavior. These views of the artistic process coincide oddly with Eastern practices, especially in Zen. Here as there the ultimate aim must not be pursued directly, rather the practitioner of, say, archery (a favorite example of the sixties and seventies), must concentrate on the process of aiming, instead of trying to hit the target.

The threat to any value system is, on the one hand, the alien elements that come from other systems who try hostile takeovers. But every system contains its own opposition as well and that is its devil, its evil power. This inherent opposition is superficially identical with the original and is yet its opposite, because it is imitation and does not have an ultimate value in view. It is the mask of Antichrist who bears the features of Christ and is yet the Evil One. It is pure imitation and it aims only at effects, not values. Where art is conservative, kitsch is reactionary. The

difference lies in the refusal to develop the aesthetic values that have already been achieved. Instead, the imitator will only cling to what is there and what has petrified, so that to him the art objects of the past are dead objects that don't serve the future. Pornography, for example, is the antithesis of love stories, but it is inherent in love stories, the inherent opposition that reduces the open-endedness of love to a rote repetition of sexual acts.

The theory of the conflicting value systems has merit, in that it doesn't demonize the commercial system and doesn't ban the aesthetic value system into an ivory tower, but lets them coexist before our eyes, even as we perceive the threat that they may be to one another. But the really interesting and far more difficult point is Broch's contention that there is a devil inherent in every value system, one who simply wants to destroy, to explode the system in its own terms, with its own elements. And in art, whose highest value is beauty, that devil is kitsch.

The only criterion for telling the one from the other is its truth, "Wahrhaftigkeit." I think here lies the essence of Broch's theory of kitsch. "Wahrhaftigkeit" is not the same as "Wahrheit," and for Broch it means that the artist attempts to depict the world as inadequate and in need of a future that is sustained by his faith, a faith in something that is perhaps the secular equivalent of the new Jerusalem of the book of *Revelation*. The work of art strives to undo death ("Aufhebung des Todes") through an experience of timelessness, of eternity, which we call beauty, whereas kitsch is simply flight from death, a running away, the art of escape, as in escape literature.

And now Broch arrives at a total rejection not only of kitsch but also of those who produce it as criminals and evildoers. Most of us wouldn't and shouldn't go that far. But in an arresting image Broch fuses political and aesthetic evil when he calls up, in just two lines, the image of the Emperor Nero enjoying the spectacle of well-arranged burning Christians in his gardens. In other words, the producer of kitsch is one who will do anything for the sake of the effect, of what in Nero's eye was beauty. Now the essay was written in 1933, Broch had Hitler in his early phase and Mussolini in Italy and Austro-Fascism in his own country to behold, and all of them liked to play act and used the techniques of entertainment to achieve public relations effects. Clearly here was a combination of kitsch and political power, and the *Kitschmenschen,* a word that Broch coined and used in another essay, were in fact also committing recognizable crimes. When he linked crime and kitsch, Broch was not far removed from what his friend Hannah Arendt much later diagnosed as the banality of evil, the relationship between intrinsic

dishonesty and sentimentality on the one hand and the license to hurt without remorse on the other. But isn't Broch giving us a handle for evaluating current political speech as well?

Broch believed that every period of decline produces kitsch. I think that kitsch crops up in the industrial age and not before. Significantly, in Germany the turn of the eighteenth to the nineteenth centuries is marked by a discussion about high and low art, notably in the correspondence between Goethe and Schiller, who see the distinction between works of mass appeal and appeal to an elite, as crucial to modern aesthetics. Living examples were Goethe himself and on the other side his own brother-in-law Christian August Vulpius, the author of those enormously successful outlaw stories. Broch thought that a society that has a solid value system would have no trouble distinguishing between good and bad art. I tend to think that Broch overlooked the industrial origin of kitsch, a fact that makes it a particularly modern problem because the Platonist in him was ever careful not to assign too much power to economic factors. And I am not sure that his life-cycle theory of history (those periods of decline) helps us much. Moreover, we are more tolerant of certain forms of popular literature than he was: I wouldn't count the detective novel among kitsch, but Broch felt that its predictability precluded the openness that he expected of true art.

II

One kind of kitsch Broch doesn't consider but to which we can apply his theory is the kitsch of the cheap horror thrills that make a mockery of physical as well as psychological suffering. It's a staple of B-movies and the concomitant literature, and it is a derivative of that stark Nero-and-the-burning-Christians-as-art-exhibit, which Broch used as the link between evil in ethics and falseness in aesthetics. The means for depicting suffering have become ever more refined, thanks to the advances in special effects, and history has supplied us with ever more examples on which to draw if we don't want to invent our own. Horror kitsch typically doesn't inquire into the sources of violence in the perpetrators and its consequences in the victims. It doesn't enhance our understanding but simply presents us with stripped images that affect our emotions and don't engage our critical faculties. Nor does it provide that cathartic breakthrough which Broch called our "irrational" perception of truths that are not accessible to logic.

A flagrant example of this is Holocaust kitsch. It is not surprising that both sentimentality and a sadistic relish of cruelty feed on such an

event. There is Holocaust pornography and a false tearful emotionality for both of which the Holocaust provides ample fodder. (I think of them as male and female kitsch respectively.) That shouldn't scandalize us: outstanding historical events call forth every type of response, the serious as well as the trivial. What is surprising is the confusion about how to judge this literary outpouring. Broch's essay on kitsch could bring some order into that confusion. He doesn't help us decide which work in particular is kitsch and which is not, as no one can tell us how to know that a particular story is a lie or the truth. But he does tell us to watch for the inconsistencies that make up lies and not to go soft when we have discovered them. "I don't mind a bit of kitsch" is, if we accept Broch, like saying, "I don't mind being lied to now and then," while actually most people bitterly resent being manipulated by untruths.

Let me recall a literary scandal that is already a bit dated but still receives attention, for example in the October 2001 issue of *PMLA*. I am referring to Binjamin Wilkomirski's *Fragments,* a fraudulent Holocaust memoir that was eventually withdrawn from the market by its German publisher, after achieving a worldwide success, including the American National Jewish Book award. Rather primitively told, the book piles horror upon horror, all seen through a small child's eyes. Taken for remembered truth, it tugged at heartstrings. Read after the fraud was disclosed, those who had been moved to sympathy by the harrowed child, now saw a ludicrous patchwork of plagiarism, inconsistencies and, worst of all that quality that was so anathema to Broch, an author aiming for effects and nothing but effects, going, as it were, for the jugular of the reader. Many readers asked themselves what had possessed them, for reading the book again, they knew they had been reading lies, that is, kitsch.

But in the convoluted world of modern theory, truth and truthfulness have no place. Memory is unreliable, a construct, as is history. And in that case, anything that moves us valuable. Besides, since witnesses are notoriously unreliable, who is to gainsay the kind of memory this particular non-Jewish Swiss liar carries around with him? If the text affects the reader, it is valid. This is the point of view which Bernard-Donals, the author of the *PMLA* article, espouses. He tries to rehabilitate the book and argues that even if the man was a fraud, he may still have written a powerful work of witnessing. What the author doesn't take into account is that he who bears false witness is not a witness as we commonly use the term.

This is the kind of confusion where Broch can help out. For Broch asks: What kind of effect? Kitsch is very effective, but its effect, not being

truthful, is of questionable significance and disappears once the reader realizes he or she has been had. Broch insisted that a work of art tell us something about the world in which we live, which means that it must have a context. The truth of an autobiography is that author and narrator are one. In reading fiction, on the other hand, we must always assume a narrator who is not identical with the author. Lies are not fiction. Kitsch masquerading as truth is eminently plausible — until you recognize its pseudo-plausibility.

Once the factual basis is withdrawn from Wilkomirski's story, what remains is the pornography of death, a wallowing in what to Broch was the ultimate "Unwert." It is a book that would have seemed sinful to him. His was a radical approach to literature, as the *Book of Revelation* is perhaps the most radical book of the Bible. Broch's distinctions are sharp and intolerant, and for this very reason can serve as guidelines, when literary judgment becomes a dull, blurred acceptance of anything that has an effect on somebody, when effectiveness itself is seen as a value. Two images from Ingeborg Bachmann, who had an affinity for Broch, come to mind: "Was wahr ist, streut nicht Sand in deine Augen" and, in analogy to Broch's "Aufhebung des Todes": "Was wahr ist, rollt den Stein von deinem Grab."

Erneuerung des Theaters?: Broch's Ideas on Drama in Context

Ernst Schürer

I

On October 24, 1932, just after completing his first play, *Die Entsühnung. Trauerspiel in drei Akten mit einem Epilog* (KW7,11–132), Broch wrote from Vienna to his friends Willa and Edwin Muir in England: "Der Zustand des deutschen Theaters ist schauderhaft (was meiner Theorie vom Absterben dieser Institution leider entspricht)." (KW13/1,220) The direct cause of this harsh condemnation were the difficulties the playwright was experiencing in trying to find a theater to produce his drama. Broch continued his lament with a humorous undertone in a letter to his translators, the Muirs, on December 18, 1932: "[. . .] so viel Dummheit und Sachunkenntnis wie beim Theater habe ich überhaupt noch nirgends angetroffen. Was ich mit dem Drama beim deutschen Theater erlebe, spottet jeder Beschreibung, ungeachtet dessen, daß ich jedesmal meinen besten Anzug angelegt habe." (KW13/1,227) With Adolf Hitler's rise to power in Germany less than two months later, these difficulties increased, and on February 7, 1933, Broch confided to the selfsame friends in another letter: "Was aber das Drama anlangt: die deutschen Theater sind zum größten Teil in einer gewaltigen Pleite begriffen." (KW13/1,232) He went on to explain that political considerations had forced German as well as Austrian theaters to produce only innocuous plays or to close their doors. One year later, Broch complained further about the miserable quality of the productions on the stages of the theaters in German-speaking countries in his "Theoretische Vorbemerkungen zur Entsühnung." He writes: "In jeder Kunst wird Schund produziert, aber in keiner ist der Prozentsatz des konsumierten Schundes so groß wie auf dem Theater" (KW7,403). He raises the question whether it is possible to effect a "Erneuerung des Theaters?" and continues: "Wenn sie möglich ist, so ist sie der Rückweg zum 'großen Theater,' zum Theater der großen humanen Probleme." (KW7,404)[1]

Broch is certainly not the first playwright or producer to have felt himself called upon to take this renewal of the theater in hand. Surely one can say without exaggeration that, since the time of the Greeks, world theater has lived by and profited from the desire of dramatists, directors, and producers to create a totally new theater. Just last week I received an invitation to a presentation by the future director of the Schauspielhaus Frankfurt am Main, Elisabeth Schweeger, who was going to speak on "Das Theater, neu erfinden?" And for the decade after the demise of Expressionist drama (ca. 1910–1924) which had created a type of unified style, one can certainly assert that the best known dramatists of those years, Bertolt Brecht, Georg Kaiser, Ernst Toller, Friedrich Wolf and Carl Zuckmayer — just like Hermann Broch — were searching for new topics, structures, and forms. Famous directors such as Jürgen Fehling, Leopold Jessner, Erwin Piscator and Max Reinhardt also made significant contributions to the regeneration and renewal of theater. To this end, they freely borrowed from the theater's toughest competition, the film industry. Broch himself remarked on the influence of this new medium of mass entertainment: "Zweifelsohne gehen wir einer Regeneration des Dramas entgegen, einer Regeneration, die technisch weitgehend vom Film bedingt sein dürfte, dem Wesen nach aber zum eigentlichen Zeitausdruck bestimmt sein wird, weit mehr als der Roman, aber eine Aufgabe darstellt, deren Schwierigkeiten vorderhand noch unermeßlich sind." (KW8,95) Such was Broch's high opinion of the dramatic genre that he places it even above the novel. He perceives of a technical, i.e. structural regeneration of the genre based upon the precedent of film. This new drama is destined to become the true expression of its times by tackling the fundamental contemporary problems. It stands to reason that during a time of global economic crisis, mass unemployment, and the struggle for supremacy between different political and economic systems, Broch defined the basic problem of his contemporaries as privation and distress caused by the deterioration of the economic and social spheres: "Das Problem des heutigen Menschen ist Not: das Humane und damit auch das Metaphysische seines Daseins bedrängt ihn in Gestalt des Wirtschaftlichen und Sozialen" (KW7,404).

In an earlier article[2] I have explained how Broch succeeded in portraying the economic and social conditions of his times in his play *Die Entsühnung*. The realistic plot of the play — constructed according to the tenets of New Objectivity (Neue Sachlichkeit) — finds its logical conclusion in the meeting of the board of trustees, the first scene of the dirge for the dead. In this final meeting it becomes apparent that the board of trustees consists only of marionettes manipulated by the

anonymous forces of the capitalist free market economy. The personal fate of all characters in the play is determined by economic developments and proves the dominance of the economic value system.

Stefan Zweig, after reading and discussing the play with Broch in Salzburg, recognized the importance of this scene and asked the author to develop it further. He also suggested that the company should be saved from bankruptcy through the intervention and financial assistance of the state and that all personal and family connections should be eliminated. This is reminiscent of the industrial development as portrayed in Georg Kaiser's *Gas* trilogy (1917–1919). Broch, however, was not happy with Zweig's suggestions and expressed his doubts in a letter to Daniel Brody of October 23, 1932: "Was Zweig von der absoluten Anonymität des Geschehens sagt, klingt mir gut und geht mir doch nicht ein: sein Vorschlag, den Staat zur Sanierung der Filsmann-Werke heranzuziehen und solcherart das Familiäre radikal auszumerzen, läuft mir irgendwie gegen den Strich, vielleicht weil dadurch das politische Moment neuerlich verstärkt werden würde, vielleicht weil mich die technischen Schwierigkeiten eines solchen Einbaus stören, vielleicht aber auch nur aus bloßem Eigensinn." (KW13/1,218) Broch could not accept the premise that resulted from the development of the drama, namely the absolute power and supremacy of the economic value system, and therefore he did not accept this rational conclusion. He suggested: "(. . .) die allgemein menschliche Problematik [muss] durchbrochen, auf eine höhere Ebene transportiert werden," namely "vom Irdischen zum Göttlichen, vom Naturalistischen zum Gedanken." (KW7,405) Therefore, he concludes the play not with this meeting but with the dirge of the women who serve as a kind of Sophoclean choir. According to Thomas Koebner, the women confront the corrupt world of the male characters with a "mutterrechtliche Heilsidee,"[3] an idea of salvation based on matriarchal law, in an attempt to lift the plot unto a higher plane to create "großes Theater."[4]

Broch wrote about his play in a letter to the Muirs: "Ich habe den Eindruck, daß es auf der Bühne ein Erfolg werden könnte, denn es erscheint mir nicht nur irgendwie 'großes Theater,' sondern auch als ein Ansatz zu jenem neuen Stil, der unbedingt gefunden werden muß, wenn das Theater überhaupt weiter bestehen soll.[. . .] Ich bin überzeugt, daß die Ziele des Theaters nach wie vor in der griechischen Abstraktheit liegen, daß aber der Nährboden, in dem allein es ruht, immer nur im Naturalistischen zu sehen ist. Diese Verbindung zwischen Naturalismus und Abstraktismus habe ich gesucht, und mag die Lösung auch nicht in völlig geglückter Form gefunden sein (man kann ja nur immer Annäh-

rungswerte finden), so ist sie doch immerhin angebahnt." (KW13/1, 216). Broch called this new style of drama an "architekturierten Naturalismus" since the basis is naturalistic. However, this naturalistic basis must be transcended: "In dem Augenblick, in dem auf der Bühne das eigentliche Problem sichtbar wird, in dem Augenblick muß auch die sophokleische Schicht erreicht sein und der Naturalismus ins Abstrakt-Stilistische umschlagen. Daß dies überhaupt möglich werden kann, ist Angelegenheit der dramatischen Architektur und entnaturalisierten Strenge" (KW7,405). Broch points out that in *Die Entsühnung* the naturalistic basis is a cross-section of the society of an industrialized Germany in 1930 but that this basis must be transcended and the Sophoclean level be reached in both content and style of the drama. This he considered his task: "Aufgabe war es, aus der sozialen und wirtschaftlichen Problematik die übergeordnete göttlich-humane zu entwickeln und solcherart, sowohl inhaltlich als stilistisch, die sophokleische Schicht zu erreichen" (KW7,406).

Broch's attempt to write such a play was doomed for two reasons. First, the dirge — the Greek abstract element of the play — is not grounded in the preceding naturalistic plot and therefore appears to be a mere appendage. Secondly, the audience is not prepared to accept the sudden move from "Irdischen zum Göttlichen, vom Naturalistischen zum Gedanken" (KW7,405) because it does not believe in the divine and because the divine has not been developed or shown to exist in the course of the stage plot itself. Thomas Koebner writes that while reading Broch's tragedy he came to see it more as a "feinfühlige Auseinandersetzung mit der historischen und gesellschaftlichen Krise zu Beginn der dreißiger Jahre — und in der Tat weniger als Exempel eines neuen Theaters, das Broch vorgeschwebt hat (nach seinen theoretischen Bemerkungen zum Stück zu urteilen)." (Koebner 78) Indeed, if we disregard Broch's notions concerning the renewal of the theater and analyze the *Entsühnung* as a period piece of New Objectivity, a "neusachliches Zeitstück," it can be considered an absolutely successful play that contributes to our understanding of the times and entertains. In his pioneering study *Theorie des modernen Theaters,* Peter Szondi defines the mission of the social dramatist. He writes that the author "versucht die dramatische Darstellung jener ökonomisch-politischen Zustände, unter deren Diktat das individuelle Leben geraten ist. Er hat Faktoren aufzuweisen, die jenseits der einzelnen Situation und der einzelnen Tat wurzeln und sie dennoch bestimmen."[5] This is exactly what Broch did. He was, however, not satisfied with the transmission of knowledge: he wanted to convey a new message. It is, however, not the duty or mission

of a dramatist to propound or convey new messages, he is not a prophet or preacher, although many German dramatists, and especially the Expressionists saw themselves in that role.

In the years between the two world wars, Broch was neither the first nor the only playwright who concerned himself with the problem of putting the modern economy on stage. However, in contrast to Broch, who had run his own business and was thoroughly familiar with the workings of the modern economy, most dramatists did not possess the necessary specialized professional knowledge or competence to understand the workings of the economy, much less to dramatize it. The international and global relationships and interdependencies of industry and the financial markets, the manipulations and speculations of the multi-national banks, the role governments, political parties and the military play in economic affairs, the new political and economic experiment in the Soviet Union, concentrations and monopolies in various branches of industry and commerce, the influence of the unions and the participation of workers in decision-making bodies, all these factors and developments made it increasingly difficult to understand economic processes.

For the playwright, the dramatic portrayal of modern economic realities and their aesthetically convincing representation on the stage presented a nearly insurmountable challenge: Even if a playwright possessed the necessary technical and professional knowledge, his dramatic representation had to be understood by the critics and the audiences, and they were accustomed to a drama which according to the classical definition presented the confrontation of two protagonists. The modern dramatists, however, were concerned with the dramatic portrayal of the impersonal economic forces that determined their lives and those of their contemporaries.

Broch took little notice of the dramatic productions and the playwrights of his times. He mentioned Ödön von Horváth and more than once Bertolt Brecht, but only to distinguish himself from them. In a letter to Egon Vietta from January 14, 1934, Broch conceded a "methodologische Verwandtschaft" (KW13/1,278) between himself and the early Brecht based on Brecht's "Überwindung des rein Naturalistischen und rein Romantischen auf dem Theater" (KW13/1,278). But Broch berated Brecht for his "beinahe sture Dogmatik, die [. . .] gerade des Wichtigsten aller Pädagogik enträt, nämlich des Humanen" (KW 13/1,278). In his "Theoretische Vorbemerkungen zur *Entsühnung*" he elaborates:

> Wenn das Brechtsche Drama trotzdem in seiner Wirkung hinter dem bürgerlich-naturalistischen Theater zurückbleibt, so liegt auch dies zum Teil an jener "Überheblichkeit," mit der die Problematik auf die Dürftigkeit von Schlagwortthesen reduziert wird, zum größten Teil jedoch daran, daß die größere Abstraktheit den Durchbruch des allgemein Menschlichen verhindert. Der Abstraktismus kapselt die begrenzte These in sich ab. (KW7,404)

Broch apparently also knew about the theatrical experiments of Mayakovsky, Meyerhold, Tairov, and Vakhtangov in Russia, but as far as Germany is concerned he only named Brecht as the sole representative of the abstract experimental theater: "Bisher haben wir einerseits das bürgerliche Theater, im alten Sinn naturalistisch und brav und langweilig, anderseits das abstrakte Versuchstheater, wie es die Russen oder in Deutschland Bert Brecht aufgestellt haben." (KW13/1,216) Brecht, however, was by no means the only German playwright experimenting with new forms at that time.

II

Several dramatists and directors, like Brecht and Broch, were fascinated by the complex economic processes and attempted to capture these in a new type of drama. Their programmatic pronouncements and their plays are of great interest to us since they show close parallels to Broch's ideas in regard to a regeneration of the theater. A comparison of the subtitles of their works already reveals that Franz Jung, Ernst Toller, Leo Lania, Lion Feuchtwanger and Gustav von Wangenheim were equally intent on generating a drama new in content and form.

We can begin with Franz Jung's *Annemarie: Ein Schauspiel in vier Akten mit Vorspiel und Nachspiel*,[6] published in 1922. *Annemarie* is the last in a series of three plays by Jung, namely *Wie lange noch? Schauspiel* (1921) (FJ 7,103–31) and *Die Kanaker: Schauspiel in vier Akten* (1921) (FJ 7,133–91). Jung wrote that a political party as well as the individual should be searching "nach den grossen Zusammenhängen von Gesellschaft und Wirtschaft und Existenz, die, wenn man sie auch verbessern oder zerstören will, man zum mindesten auch kennen und verstehen sollte."[7] Just like Broch, Jung tried to present a holistic picture of contemporary society and to include in his plays private and public affairs — especially contemporary political and economic problems. He wanted to avoid a biased presentation. In 1927, he stated in his essay "Zurück zum Theater":

> Es gibt genug überflüssige Geschichtsschreiber und Psychologen von Beruf, die herausfinden könnten, daß alle namhaften Dramatiker, deren Wirkung feststeht, aus der Zeit heraus geschrieben haben und deren Ausdruck, der Gesellschaft noch vielfach unbewußt, bewußter zu fixieren bemüht gewesen sind. Für diese Aufgabe schufen sie sich ihre technischen Mittel. (FJ 1/1,290)

Jung does not explain, however, the technical means the dramatists used, but he himself placed special emphasis on a factor that one "vielleicht als Atmosphäre bezeichnen kann." (FJ 1/1,288) The importance of the atmosphere, "Stimmung," is also stressed by Jung in his "Bemerkungen für den Regisseur" (FJ 7,195) for the production of *Annemarie*. He speaks about the "Atmosphären-Schicksal" (FJ 7,196) of the characters or types: "Im Grunde sind sämtliche *Arbeitertypen* auf der einen Seite ebenso wie sämtliche *Bürgertypen* auf der anderen gleich. Sie unterscheiden sich nur im Verhältnis zu ihrer Atmosphäre." (FJ 7,195) He ends his "Bemerkungen für den Regisseur" with the admonition: "Keine psychologischen Individualisierungen, nicht Einzeltragik — alles kollektiv, alles Atmosphäre." FJ 7,199) The psychological state of most characters in his plays is a product of this atmosphere which on the other hand is created by the group in which the individual lives. Gender, class, religion, profession, age or other dominant factors might determine the group atmosphere. The stress on atmosphere also means that Jung's plays are to have an affective and not a didactic effect on the audience.

Jung was strongly influenced by the ideas of Charles Darwin, Karl Marx, Otto Gross, and Charles Fourier, but he combined their ideas in a most idiosyncratic and personal manner. In consequence, we find in his plays the social and existential thesis that every human is threatened by isolation and existential anxiety and, therefore, seeks interpersonal relationships, first to the other sex, but also in religious communities which provide a communal rhythm. However, these relations are only a substitute for the truly productive human solidarity of the labor struggle (Arbeitskampf) so crucial for life itself. Two preconditions for the social solidarity desired are the emancipation of women and freedom from authority (Herrschaftsfreiheit). Solidarity is essential in the struggle to secure the basic necessities, political rights, and human dignity for each individual human being who is entitled to a job that is psychologically satisfying and fulfilling, and pays a just wage sufficient for food, clothing, and housing. Only in this manner can the economic independence and resulting freedom of the individual be guaranteed.

Jung believed that this goal could only be achieved by taking possession of the means of production, which constitutes the critical and deci-

sive action in all three of his plays. He also outlined how the owners and their collaborators fight against this expropriation with all means at their disposal, such as propaganda, terror, and brute force, and that on a global basis. But in many cases the workers themselves are influenced by personal desires and sabotage the conquest of the machines, the "Eroberung der Maschinen," (FJ 4,3) as Jung called it, through their disunity and refusal to act in common. Human ambition and the desire to be better and wealthier than one's neighbor prove stronger than all calls for solidarity and help for the socially weaker and disadvantaged.

In the first and second acts of *Annemarie* the strong connections between the personal and the public spheres are stressed: in the fighting over a woman, in the quarrels of men about their status in the party, in the relationship of the director to his wife, and in the love affairs of the young people who disregard class boundaries for their own gain. The economic background is portrayed during the third act: the problems of the mining company are discussed during an extraordinary meeting of the shareholders. The firm has become an object for speculation on the stock market and has fallen under the influence of the banks. Threatened by bankruptcy, it is finally sold to an industrial consortium that by this move eliminates a competitor. The workers lose their jobs and even the president considers himself disgracefully deceived and betrayed.

The similarities of topic and characters between Jung's play and Broch's drama are striking. In both, all characters are motivated by self-interest, and in the final analysis all are only interested in saving their own skin. Just as Broch does in the epilogue, Jung portrays a visionary utopia in the "Nachspiel" to his play. (FJ 7,284–91) Seventy or eighty years have passed, and the workers live in an idyllic commune where all their material needs are taken care off, while their spiritual well-being is assured through the warmth and intimacy (Innigkeit) of the community. How this utopia came about is, however, neither portrayed nor explained. If the audience is not already perplexed because of the complicated economic developments in the plot it will be totally confused by Jung's epilogue. His theoretical intentions are constantly being thwarted by his own strong individualistic tendencies and they are, therefore, not realized in the play. Human solidarity and a truly humane community are posited as a goal or portrayed in a utopia, but they are not shown as something possible or attainable, or perhaps even existing. Jung's interest is centered not so much on social but rather on personal and individual problems.

Thomas Koebner has drawn attention to the similarities between Broch's *Die Entsühnung* and Ernst Toller's *Hoppla, wir leben!*[8] He calls

it "ein Werk, das gleichfalls ein Gesellschaftspanorama ausbreitet und zudem, wie die *Entsühnung* in einer Schicht, den Konflikt zwischen unzeitgemäßen revolutionären, sozusagen expressionistischen Impulsen und sachlichen Kompromissen in der sozialen Realität entwickelt." (Koebner 82). Toller's play premiered in 1927 in Hamburg and Berlin where it was staged by Erwin Piscator who considered Toller's drama a programmatic piece, ideologically correct and therefore appropriate for the opening of his revolutionary Piscator-Stage. For Piscator, the "Begegnung mit der Zeit"[9] was essential; he wanted to show, using Toller's play, a "sozialen und politischen Aufriß einer ganzen Epoche" (Piscator 146). In 1922 Piscator had written in a letter to the left-wing periodical *Weltbühne:*

> Wir wollen nicht Theater, sondern Wirklichkeit. Die Wirklichkeit ist noch immer das größere Theater. Was soll uns in einer Welt, in der die wahren Erschütterungen von der Entwicklung eines neuen Goldfeldes, von der Petroleum-Produktion und vom Weizenmarkt ausgehen, die Problematik von Halbverrückten! Wir sehen Zustände, politische, gesellschaftliche, wirtschaftliche und ihre Einwirkung auf Menschen oder deren Einwirkung auf sie. Das versuchen wir zu gestalten.[10]

Piscator developed "Grundlinien der soziologischen Dramaturgie" (Piscator 130), which were intended to show the individual "untrennbar verbunden mit den großen politischen und ökonomischen Faktoren seiner Zeit."(Piscator 132) He demanded "Die Steigerung der privaten Szenen ins Historische [. . .] ins Politische, Ökonomische und Soziale" "als Grundgedanke jeder Bühnenhandlung." (Piscator 133–34) In order to make the historical, political, economic and social background more easily comprehensible and understandable to the audience, Piscator used films and projected photographs, statistics, and other materials on huge screens in the theater.

Toller had studied economics and had followed the post-war political and economic developments in Germany while in prison. Therefore, he was well prepared to comment on them in his dramatic productions. In *Hoppla, wir leben!* he presents a cross-section of German society and the economy in all their manifestations. He stresses the interdependence of industry, finance, government and the military, the industrial-military complex. Many of the topics explored by Broch in *Die Entsühnung* also surface in Toller's play, and just, like Broch, he portrays the economic and political situation around 1928 in a realistic and objective manner. He is not successful, however, in integrating the economic and political background into the plot in such a manner that it plays a decisive role as

especially Piscator wished it to do. The tragic fate of the protagonist results not from socio-economic causes, but from personal problems. Toller writes: "Wir wissen, daß auch der Sozialismus nur jenes Leid lösen wird, das herrührt aus der Unzulänglichkeit sozialer Systeme, daß ein Rest bleibt von unlöslicher Tragik, bestimmt durch den Eindruck kosmischer Kräfte."[11] The ability of social systems to alleviate human suffering is limited by the fact that not all personal tragedies are caused by society but by what Toller called cosmic, or superhuman forces. As Koebner has pointed out, Toller refers just like Broch to the metaphysical forces that lie beyond human reason (Koebner 82).

Lion Feuchtwanger expressed the shift in literary interests in 1927 in an essay on "Die Konstellation der Literatur," in which he disparages Neo-Romanticism as well as Expressionism: "Produzierende und Konsumenten haben formalistischen, ästhetisch tändelnden Kram ebenso satt wie alles Ekstatische, gefühlsmäßig Übertonte. Was Schreibende und Leser suchen, ist nicht Übertragung subjektiven Gefühls, sondern Anschauung des Objekts: anschaulich gemachtes Leben der Zeit, dargeboten in einleuchtender Form. Erotisches rückt an die Peripherie, Soziologisches, Wirtschaftliches, Politisches in die Mitte. Don Juan in seinen endlosen Varianten hat abgewirtschaftet, an seine Stelle tritt der kämpfende Mensch, Politiker, Sportler, Geschäftsmann. Den Schreiber und den Leser fesselt Gestaltung des unmittelbar Greifbaren: Sitten und Gebräuche des heraufkommenden Proletariats, die Institutionen Amerikas, Fabriken, Konzerne, Autos, Sport, Petroleum, Sowjetrußland."[12] The sociological, economic, and political concerns are supposed to take center stage, and the battle for energy sources in particular, which Georg Kaiser had already portrayed in his *Gas*-trilogie, attracted much literary interest.

In Feuchtwanger's "Stück in drei Akten" *Die Petroleuminseln,*[13] the monopolistic practices of the oil industry serve as a background to a struggle for love and economic supremacy. Like many other authors, Feuchtwanger was at this time very much interested in the situation in the United States, and he incorporates in his play all the characteristics considered by Europeans to be typically American, such as cut-throat economic competition, loud and crude advertisement and publicity, technological advances, objectivity, brutal gangster methods, prohibition, sport, cinema, racial unrest, and religious rackets. But his drama is by no means a representation of socio-economic conditions; rather, it is a celebration of great personalities. Therefore, Feuchtwanger was also, as he wrote, indifferent as to whether "man etwa das Stück in New York mit kapitalistischer, in Berlin mit proletarischer Tendenz spielt. Wenn

man mir nur vorne den Kampf der Frau richtig und unverrückt bringt, wie ich ihn sehe."[14] The play could definitely not be performed with a proletarian emphasis since none exists, as the workers and the common people in general appear only as a chorus to comment upon the actions of the main characters. Although Feuchtwanger portrays the legally unrestricted hostility of business towards man, nature, and culture, he fails in his theoretical intentions to place the sociological and economic at the heart of the drama. He rather emphasizes individual destiny and the struggle of the protagonists. The traditional plot is mirrored in the structure of the play.

The failure to connect the private and the economic spheres also doomed a play produced by Erwin Piscator in Berlin during the following year, 1928: Leo Lania's "Komödie der Wirtschaft" *Konjunktur,*[15] which was apparently intended to counter Feuchtwanger's *Petroleuminseln*. The protagonist is again a heroine, but this time, in accordance with Piscator's revolutionary intentions, a Soviet agent, while the action once more centers on the competition between huge trusts for undiscovered oil deposits, which eventually leads to war and revolution. Piscator who at this time and in his own words was treading "auf das Gebiet der aktuellen Weltwirtschaftspolitik," (Piscator 200) wanted to drop the play after the dress rehearsal since, in his opinion, the position of the Soviet Union was compromised "im wirtschaftspolitischen Kampf um die Absatzmärkte für Öl [. . .]: ihre Beziehung resp. Gegensätze zu den Öl produzierenden und verkaufenden amerikanischen und englischen Konzernen sowie ihre Stellung als Konkurrent innerhalb der kapitalistischen Weltwirtschaft." (Piscator 200) And moreover, as Piscator wrote, "die weibliche Hauptfigur [tritt] zugleich als Vertreterin des russischen Naphta-Syndikats und als politische Agentin der dritten Internationale auf. Böswillige oder Unwissende konnten aus dieser Doppelstellung den Rückschluß ziehen, daß die Sowjetunion nationale Revolutionen anzettle, um sich zu günstigen Bedingungen in den Besitz von Öl zu setzen." (Piscator 200) The flexible and unscrupulous Bertolt Brecht, who along with the author and Felix Gasbarra was assisting Piscator in his work, advanced a solution: the protagonist was in reality "die Vertreterin der südamerikanischen ABC-Staaten [. . .], die ihre Rolle als Sowjetagentin nur vorgetäuscht hatte." (Piscator 201) This meant that only the ending needed to be rewritten. However, it was not the alteration which condemned the play to failure but the divergence of the economic and comic plots connected tenuously only by a film. As Brecht aptly remarked: "Das Petroleum sträubt sich gegen die fünf Akte."[16]

More successful was the "Theaterkollektiv Truppe 31" under the direction of Gustav von Wangenheim with their *Agitprop-Revue* [Agitation and Propaganda-Revue] *Die Mausefalle* (1931).[17] Wangenheim intended to convince by means of economic arguments presented on the stage unemployed white-collar workers who had supported the *NSDAP,* the Nazi Party, in the elections of 1930, that they should form a united front with the proletariat and vote for the *FKPD,* the Communist Party. A bank employee with the symbolic name of Heinrich Fleißig is used as an example of the disintegration of the personality caused by vividly portrayed and diagnosed economic problems.

Wangenheim's montage of individual scenes combines elements of the cabaret and the revue. The members of the ensemble collected the materials for the individual scenes. Inge von Wangenheim reports:

> Der eine mußte bei den Bankangestellten Reportagen machen, der andere in einer Schuhfabrik, der dritte mußte sämtliche Schuhmacher seiner Gegend gehörig ausfragen, der vierte mußte das Material über die Handwerker des Mittelalters sammeln, der fünfte Zeitungsausschnitte — jeder von uns bekam Broschüren, Bücher und wissenschaftliche Werke zum Durchackern — über die verschiedenen Wirtschaftssysteme verschiedener Kapitalisten, über die Angestelltenfrage, über die Industrialisierung, über die Rationalisierung, über die Lösung dieser Probleme in der Sowjetunion.[18]

Gustav von Wangenheim developed the overall concept of the play, which revolved around the antithesis of the cult of the leader, the "Führer" (the watchword of the National Socialists) and solidarity (the battle cry of the Communist Party).

In the individual scenes problems and economic issues are vividly portrayed. The scenes themselves are improvised or rather seem to be improvised directly on stage by the collective of the actors, which allows the audience to participate and join in the acting. This strategy is implied in the action itself, for the main character, Fleißig, steps down into the house, sits down among the audience and only steps back over the footlights onto the stage after several scenes. Thus, he is part of the audience and comes out of the audience. With years of experience in the theater Wangenheim was able to fashion his production to suit his audience that he tried to involve as much as possible. The actors performed both individually and as a chorus, and each one adopted several roles since empathy and identification with the character was not intended, but rather a convincing presentation of ideas. The individual actors also faced the audience directly and explained certain quotes and problems. Both the style of performance and acting were estranged in a Brechtian manner.

For the most part the text is composed of quotes derived from all imaginable sources such as newspapers, party programs, scientific works (Gundolf, Treitschke) and particularly from the works of classical authors such as Goethe and Shakespeare. It is evident that Wangenheim, a professional actor and the son of Reinhardt-actor, Eduard von Winterstein, was quoting off the cuff and greatly enjoyed distorting the quotes. An ideological justification for the use of quotes was advanced in the printed program: "Die Truppe 31 sieht ihre Aufgabe darin, Wirklichkeit in ihren Zusammenhängen zu erfassen und darzustellen. Daher sind Zitate und Reportage wesentliche Elemente dieser Revue."[19] Quotes from the classics serve all possible purposes, even advertising, as in the Taba motto:

> Über allen Gipfeln ist Ruh,
> Über allen Schuhen ist Tabas Schuh![20]

The spoken text is effectively broken up by music, popular tunes and gags and thus never becomes boring. Frank Trommler writes of their performances in general: "Die Truppe 31 erläuterte die Bühnenvorgänge, brachte eine Mischung aus Kabarett, Chor, filmischen Elementen, Allegorien und handfesten politischen Dialogen, in unschwer zu erkennender Weiterentwicklung der vor 1930 so beliebten Revueparodie."[21] Friedrich Wolf could maintain with some justification: "Dieses Stück der Truppe 31 war der stärkste, der breiteste und tiefste Theatererfolg im letzten Berliner Theaterwinter."[22] [1931–32] Wangenheim was justified in disputing a lead article in the newspaper of the Social Democratic Party *Vorwärts* of July 12, 1931, which maintained that economics is "fate" (Schicksal). His "simple" solution, namely that the transfer of the means of production from private to public ownership would solve all problems almost automatically, is of course extremely naïve, likewise his belief that rationalization carried out in a capitalist system leads to the exploitation and alienation of the workers, whereas in a socialist system it is to their benefit. Wangenheim, however, succeeded in realizing his political intentions by using the revue form and by clearly differentiating it from the old form of drama by means of quotations and parody. No one, however, would maintain that this is "großes Theater" as Broch envisioned it.

III

Some tentative conclusions can be drawn from a comparison of these plays: The programmatic orientation of the dramatists towards the economic and social sphere as constituting "das Problem des heutigen Menschen" (KW7,404) necessitated a search for new structures since the

classical form of the "grosse Theater" proved insufficient to the task. The attempts of Piscator, Toller and Lania to strengthen the old form of the drama by adopting elements from the revue and film lead to hybrid forms that were neither fish nor fowl. They were failures in that they were not successful in incorporating the economic and political into the drama. Broch's experiment of combining the naturalist drama with an abstract element through differentiating styles of language did not result in a new drama since he did not succeed in his attempt to lead the play back from the political and economic sphere into the private and religious-mystical realm. However, Broch succeeded more convincingly than his predecessors in highlighting the extremely complicated workings of modern capitalist society and the motivations of entrepreneurs as well as white and blue collar workers. In contrast to Gustav von Wangenheim and Bertolt Brecht, Broch also did not write a didactic play based on ideological presuppositions, he rather presented the economic, social, and political realities of his times. In addition, he showed the personal problems caused by economic crisis and political radicalization. In *Die Entsühnung* he portrays the destruction of the human qualities of all characters even of those who survive physically. The realities of the economic situation and the anonymity of the modern economy are, therefore, reproduced most convincingly in his drama. Although Broch might not have found the new form of the great theater, the "große Theater" he envisioned, he nevertheless succeeded in writing one of the best plays of the period of New Objectivity.

The critical remarks of Theodor W. Adorno about Rolf Hochhuth's *Stellvertreter* (1963) can also be applied to these plays: "Überall wird personalisiert, um anonyme Zusammenhänge, die dem theoretisch nicht Gewitzigten nicht länger durchschaubar sind und deren Höllenkälte das verängstigte Bewußtsein nicht mehr ertragen kann, lebendigen Menschen zuzurechnen und dadurch etwas von spontaner Erfahrung zu retten [. . .] Keine traditionelle Dramaturgie von Hauptakteuren leistet es mehr. Die Absurdität des Realen drängt auf eine Form, welche die realistische Fassade zerschlägt."[23] In the seven decades since Broch wrote his play and even in the forty years since Adorno penned his thoughts, the anonymity and impersonality in the economic, political, and social spheres have grown as never before. Therefore, the study and analysis of these plays by authors who made the attempt to dramatize the threat posed to the individual by the anonymity of forces which have a strong influence on his life is highly relevant in our days when especially the economic sphere, a dominant factor in the life of nations and the individual, is again labeled as fate beyond the control of the individual.

Notes

[1] Broch developed similar ideas in his 1934 remarks "Erneuerung des Theaters?" (KW9/2,58–60).

[2] Ernst Schürer, "Brochs *Die Entsühnung* und das Drama der Neuen Sachlichkeit," *Modern Austrian Literature* 13,4 (1980): 77–98.

[3] Thomas Koebner, "Brochs Trauerspiel *Die Entsühnung* (1932)," in: Paul Michael Lützeler, ed. *Hermann Broch* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1986), 87. Quoted in the text as Koebner.

[4] Only Ernst Schönwiese in his preface to the radio play version of the drama which he edited — see Hermann Broch, *Die Entsühnung* (Zürich: Rhein-Verlag, 1961. 10–11) — considers Broch's drama a "Zeitstück," als well as "großes Theater": He writes: "Um ein historisches Zeitbild also der Jahre unmittelbar vor der sogenannten Machtergreifung handelt es sich zunächst, das in den Konsequenzen, die Broch schon 1932 voraussah, von geradezu prophetischem Weitblick ist. Das Besondere und Einmalige an dem Drama aber bleibt, daß dies alles vom Dichter ins Überzeitliche, ins Zeitlos-Ewige gehoben wurde in den Gestalten der Frauen und vor allem der Mütter, die jener abgestorbenen Männerwelt gegenübergestellt sind." It is my contention that Broch was not successful in integrating the world of the women and especially the mothers into the play.

[5] Peter Szondi, *Theorie des modernen Dramas* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1963), 63.

[6] Franz Jung, *Werke in Einzelausgaben*. 12 vols. (Hamburg: Lutz Schulenburg, 1981–1997), 7,193–291. All further references to this edition in the text under FJ with volume and page numbers.

[7] Franz Jung, *Der Weg nach unten. Aufzeichnungen aus einer großen Zeit.* (Hamburg: Lutz Schulenburg, 1985), 164–65.

[8] Ernst Toller, *Hoppla, wir leben! Ein Vorspiel und fünf Akte* (Potsdam: Gustav Kiepenheuer, 1927).

[9] Erwin Piscator, *Das politische Theater*. Revised by Felix Gasbarra. With a preface by Wolfgang Drews (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1963), 146. Quoted in the text as Piscator.

[10] Erwin Piscator, *Schriften*. 2 vols. (Berlin: Aufbau Verlag, 1968), 1,143.

[11] Ernst Toller, *Quer durch. Reisebilder und Reden*. (Berlin: Gustav Kiepenheuer, 1930), 283.

[12] Lion Feuchtwanger, *Centum opuscula. Eine Auswahl* (Rudolstadt: Greifenverlag, 1956), 419, as quoted in: Joseph Pischel, *Lion Feuchtwanger. Versuch über Leben und Werk* (Leipzig: Philipp Reclam jun., 1976), 72.

[13] Lion Feuchtwanger, *Drei angelsächsische Stücke* (Berlin: Propyläen Verlag, 1927), 1–108.

[14] Lion Feuchtwanger, "Zu meinem Stück 'Die Petroleuminseln,'" in: *Centum opuscula,* 393, as quoted in Joseph Pischel, *Lion Feuchtwanger. Versuch über Leben und Werk,* 76.

[15] Since in spite of all efforts I could not locate the text of the comedy I had to rely on the outline of the plot and of the production on the Piscator-Bühne in Erwin Piscator, *Das politische Theater,* 196–205.

[16] Bertolt Brecht, *Schriften zum Theater*. Vol. 1: 1918–1933 (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1963), 226.

[17] Günther Rühle, *Zeit und Theater*. 3 vols. (Berlin: Propyläen, 1972), 2,601–698.

[18] Inge von Wangenheim, *Mein Haus Vaterland* (Berlin: Aufbau, 1962), 422.

[19] Quoted in the commentary to the play by Günther Rühle, *Zeit und Theater,* 3, 829.

[20] Gustav von Wangenheim, "Die Mausefalle," in: Günther Rühle, *Zeit und Theater,* 2,624.

[21] Frank Trommler, "Das politisch-revolutionäre Theater," in: *Die deutsche Literatur der Weimarer Republik*. Ed. Wolfgang Rothe (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1974), 105.

[22] Friedrich Wolf, "Verfall des bürgerlichen Theaters, Vormarsch der proletarischen Kunst!" in: Friedrich Wolf, *Gesammelte Werke in sechzehn Bänden*. Ed. by Elsa Wolf and Walther Pollatschek (Berlin and Weimar: Aufbau, 1967), 15, 260–61.

[23] Theodor W. Adorno, "Offener Brief an Rolf Hochhuth," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung,* June 10, 1967.

"Der Rhythmus der Ideen": On the Workings of Broch's Cultural Criticism

Bernhard Fetz

TO SUM UP THE WORK of Hermann Broch, in a possible-impossible sum, to use Broch's language, the work centers around the question of how totality is theoretically tenable in a fragmented, differentiated world and obtainable in the process of writing. At the same time, the texts confront the paradox of always being the expression of what they simultaneously seek to overcome.[1]

The art of modernism reacted to the accelerated rhythm of modern life, the tempo set by machine, money, communications systems and media, by revolutionizing poetic language. Broch himself contributed to this reaction, driving out the devil of fragmentation with the Beelzebub of a polyhistoric, formally complex novel. The enthusiastic stance of the various avant-gardes, however, which celebrated the frenzied productive powers and the tides of traffic as a kind of liberation from the old order, liberation from the terror of the signified, was completely foreign to Broch the Platonist. The author thus appears caught in a peculiar position, as a modern writer conscious of form who pushed the novel to its limits and as a conservative cultural critic for whom the masses, the metropolis, popular culture, and the purely self-referential façade of functional architecture could come to epitomize evil.

The figure that comes to bear in producing the texts is one of ambivalence. On the level of the psychic constructed in his letters and in *Psychische Selbstbiographie*,[2] which was written in 1942 as an autobiography largely informed by psychoanalysis, it appears as a double bind between ethical duty and individual neurotic disposition, as a futile struggle with a self-imposed ideal of performing one's duty. This double bind is likewise true of Broch's unattainable aspiration to push his knowledge and learning into as many fields as possible: "ich führe einen aufreibend zähen Kampf gegen den eigenen Dilettantismus," he wrote to Kurt Wolff on 11 September 1942 (KW13/2, 292). When *Psychische Selbstbiographie* was first published in 1999, it surpassed yet again the nexus of corresponding and contradictory discourses in Broch's work, through

the auto-analytical development of a psychic mechanism that groans and creaks in the hinges. This brilliant rhetorical act of violence nourishes elements of self-suspicion with every sentence, which it nevertheless seeks to invalidate with the help of Freudian tools and with recourse to Otto Weininger's arsenal. Broch obviously refers to Weininger's dualism of saint and whore: he invokes an idea of platonic love but which is permanently thwarted by sexual desire.

On a textual level, the ambivalence seems to be a rhetorical strategy of excess: the state of equilibrium between the self and the world, between partial systems and a transcendental vanishing point, between the desire to have an impact and the autonomy of art, is only imaginable as a possibility, and depicted through the permanent creation of imbalances or differences. The brokenness, the inconsistency and the unfinished in the work are not only owing to external circumstances; it is system-inherent, inherent to the system of art and to Broch's system. Applying considerations of systems theory in view of Broch's poetics, one could formulate the idea as follows: in the realm of Broch's writing one continually encounters "irritations," which are not from without, from the environment or from the *real* reality, but rather arise from within this realm, which is a part of the system of art.

Similarities between Broch's theory of values and Niklas Luhmann's systems theory have often been pointed out.[3] Similarity, however, is based on difference. By no means can Luhmann only be seen as subsequent evidence and confirmation of Broch's theory of the disintegration of values. Luhmann describes the change of paradigm in the early modern period, with its central culmination point around 1800, as a decrease in the "Richtlinienkompetenz" of the past and an increase in the "Unsicherheit der Zukunft."[4] For Luhmann this instability of the future also had to do with the "Zusammenbruch der Einheit christlicher Weltbeschreibung," he collapse of a unified Christian worldview, in addition to many other factors that one could describe from an evolutionary perspective as an increase in complexity. Parallel to this development society becomes increasingly self-reflexive, registering and observing more and more precisely its own progressing complexity, and constantly refining the instruments with which it seeks to react to the situation. Luhmann speaks of "Irritation." This irritation, "Irritationserzeugung in der modernen, funktional differenzierten Gesellschaft," produces an array of phenomena that cannot be reduced to the simple denominator of a medieval theodicy. Rather, the attempt to cope with reality turns to modality. We find ourselves confronting an "einzige Realwelt," "deren Strukturen aber reiche Möglichkeitsüberschüsse generieren" (Luhmann,

88). And this is consequently a decisive difference to Broch's model: "Möglichkeiten zu ermöglichen," which enables "Imagination"; we can complement art, but also for example technology, precisely because it performs reductions on reality (Luhmann, 93).

At the same time, that is, around 1800, a shift occurs in "Leitsemantik von Ontologie auf Sprache," whereby language attains a symbolic character and no longer permits ontological true/false conclusions. That is, every claim to truth must reckon with its own opposite: "was konstruiert wird, kann auch dekonstruiert werden" (Luhmann 94f.). An awareness of the change from ontology to language is written into Broch's work as a partly conscious, partly unconscious assumption, competing with his rudimentary theory of language with its eschatological-utopian elements.[5] Luhmann now makes a critical argument that concerns Broch as well: the attempt to arrest the flow of meanings determined by the symbolic character of language with any sort of "Einheitskonzepte," from Kant's transcendental subject to Habermas's concept of communicative action, has devastating political consequences: "Denn jede Gesellschaft, die auf letzte Kriterien des Richtigen zurückgreift, ist auf Mechanismen sozialer Diskriminierung angewiesen" (Luhmann, 95). By no means are we condemned to fatalistically accept postmodern relativism or be branded with the apocalyptic. Rather, a new quality can emerge and art assumes a prominent role in defining this quality. What it depends on according to Luhmann, is the constant scrutiny of every action and every thought by specifying the "Systemreferenz," that is, by asking the question, who is it that is saying something? Every statement is thereby modalized and this is particularly true of "Theorien mit universalem [. . .] Geltungsanspruch." Precisely such theories require the corrective of constant modalization. For Broch this corrective is the "Dichterische." For Luhmann reality is no longer "was sich aus dem Widerstand der Außenwelt gegen Erkenntnisversuche ergibt, sondern Realität ergibt sich für ein System aus dem Widerstand der eigenen Operationen gegen die eigenen Operationen" (Luhmann, 96).

Let us turn to Broch. His *Massenwahntheorie* as the sum of his reflections on politics and values assumes an appropriation of the unformed, libidinal outer world by the realm of the rational. Knowledge is progressive self-confirmation in the process of appropriating the world: In fragments on his theory of mass psychology Broch writes:

> Als vernünftiges Verhalten darf daher dasjenige gelten, das [. . .] immer weitere Stücke der Weltrealität zu bewältigen trachtet und sich an dieser fortlaufend verifiziert. In dieser ständigen, ewig unabgeschlossenen Weiterentwicklung zur Weltrealität [. . .] darf die Vernunft als der Prototyp eines *offenen Systems* angesprochen werden.[6]

An underpinning of this concept is a classic subject-object relation, which Luhmann's systems theory moved beyond.

But what do "Irritation" and "Modalität" mean in the context of art? Art's increasing autonomy is a process whose external causes lie in the emancipation of the artist from secular or ecclesiastical patrons. The internal causes lie in an inner artistic evolutionary process which, according to Pierre Bourdieu, allows that at any given point in time the possibilities of technique, form, or content accumulated in the field of art can be realized by any artist by exercising individual choice. Both lead to formal innovation, as art no longer has to please and stands in sharp contrast to convention.[7] What can be considered as emancipation from forces external to art and as constant formal innovation, in Broch's case, for instance in the *Hofmannsthal* essay, has negative connotations. Broch's ambivalent attitude towards the artistic, and especially the poetic avant-garde (expressionism, Dadaism) is thoroughly laden with resentment; this avant-garde, however, realized in an important point, to speak in terms of systems theory, exactly what Broch himself declared in *Der Tod des Vergil,* namely, the negation of art in art: "Die eigene Evolution bringt das Kunstsystem in den Zustand perfekter Autonomie, und das heißt: dass es auch die Negation von Kunst nur selber vollziehen kann" (Luhmann, 97). As Luhmann claims, art needs art in order to eliminate itself.

The function of art, in Luhmann's conception, is to introduce something incommunicable, something that transcends language as a system of communication into a communicative context. Broch calls this myth, the lyrical, music, and so on. Luhmann calls it perception. A work of art creates another, imaginary reality, which is apart from the *real* reality; it introduces a difference that causes irritation and allows different modalities of perception. (98) The person beholding a work of art is free to choose how to bridge the realities, affirmatively, ironically or otherwise.[8] Luhmann is formulating an aesthetic of efficacy here that differs from Broch's duty-centered agenda for ethical upbringing, formulated primarily in his essays. In the case of *Die Schlafwandler* and *Vergil,* perhaps sometimes contrary to the author's intention, we follow a constant change of perspective that constantly changes the status of what is asserted as well. (The series of essays "Zerfall der Werte" stands in tense relation to the level of narration.) What is significant is that despite the

closure of the functional systems, they must permanently reexamine themselves with regard to a likewise constantly changing environment, precisely by marking themselves off from this environment.[9] Luhmann sees a process where Broch speaks of static systems of values encapsulated within themselves. There is an "unausweichliche, nicht eliminierbare Herrschaft der Differenz." Luhmann gives an example with regard to the art of modernism: even art that wants to be non-art is still art.[10]

Without the creation of differences through irritations Broch's system would subsist in a kind of dogmatic stiffness, which is exactly what interpreters coming from the standpoint of ideology critique, mainly in the seventies, accused the author of doing, and thereby threw out the baby with the bathwater. Broch's work is virtually a model case for a general history of literary reception after 1945. In the fifties it often served as the projection space for apolitical palaver about humanity, while in the past twenty years it has served conspicuously as the starting point of deconstructionist, cultural-historical or philosophical-historical research. And it has prompted, with good reason, heated debates in ideology critique — with reason, since the authoritarian character of the political theory, the savior-*Führer* discourse is obvious.[11]

How, though, do the texts create the differences, the irritations, which arise "aus dem Widerstand der eigenen Operationen gegen die eigenen Operationen"?[12] Or from a deconstructionist perspective: how does the double movement of Broch's texts function, where the rhetorical construction undermines the basic idea?

I. The Architecture of the Realm of Writing

Paul Michael Lützeler has pointed out the significance of architecture metaphors, especially for the construction of *Die Schlafwandler*,[13] and this design is operative into the last ramifications of Broch's text production. In the *Hofmannsthal* essay of 1947/48, again unfolding his own poetic, Broch speaks at length of the architectonic aspects of a work of art, of its "zuchtvolle Architektur-Symbolik," of the fact that style had an "architektonisch-moralische" significance for Hofmannsthal, that "Erkenntnis, Sittlichkeit und Kunst" "zu gemeinsamer Architektonik verschmelzen" (KW9/1,216–17). It is astonishing how this desire for construction, for system, for a structure of values and text architecture spans Broch's entire career, from his early writings to his late work. The architecture of the text and its value structures are constantly in jeopardy of collapse, because of the text's production of its own dynamic, its rhetoric of excess that cannot be halted.

In a letter to Giuseppe Antonio Borgese dated 3 March 1940, Broch writes that he finds the "Realisierbarkeit einer Absurdität" which Hitler's system represents such an "aufregendes Faktum" that its observation and analysis practically begins to assume a life of its own "als selbsttätige Funktion meiner Schreibmaschine" (KW13/2,173). The tendency of originally minor sized projects to grow into the barely or no longer manageable is typical of Broch; he commented on it on repeated occasions. What follows, delineates some of the forms of the automatic functioning of Broch's typewriter.

II. Rhythm

The following entry comes from an unpublished early notebook, most likely from around 1910:

> Ich begreife nicht daß ein ~~Dichter~~ Künstler und Maler geben kann, die Naturalisten, speziell Menschennaturalisten sind. Denn höchstes Künstlertum ist reinster Rhytmus, und der reine Rhytmus ist das Gegenteil jeder Viecherei. Die Menschen, wie alle aber haben eine Verdauung fühlen sich feucht an und riechen. Er ist ein Hampel ~~Der höchste Künstler~~ mann, wenn er den Beifall der Organismen sucht, er ist halb, wenn er sie als bewunderte Objekte und Modelle besitzt, und er ist ganz wenn er sein Künstlertum nur im Rhytmus seiner Ideen findet.[14]

This entry must be read in the context of the vitalistic currents of the time it was written.[15] Rhythm as an aesthetic experience already had a unifying quality for the young Broch. The artist is only complete when he leaves naturalism behind and renounces public acclaim, when he suspends his own empirical existence in the medium of art. What is expressed here in raw form was later to grow into a complex theoretical structure; whereby the later attacks on material existence are often no less vehement rhetorically than the earlier notes.[16] Even when one considers the respective context of the texts' genesis, this early quote exhibits structural similarities to the *Hofmannsthal* essay written forty years later. Broch speaks here of the interplay between the dynamic and the static: the "Inhalte zwischen den Inhalten, die sichtbare Unsichtbarkeit" are the "Produkt der dynamischen Spannung," which "die Ordnung und Anordnung der Symbole bewirkt" (KW9/1,216).

Both cases concern a model of wholeness produced out of a kind of purified, *Platonic* movement, and both cases deal with self-referential poetic statements. But how is this movement arranged? Let us introduce as a "missing link" an additional passage from the thirties:

> Des Menschen Verzweiflung ist groß, denn da er am Wort zweifelt, verzweifelt er auch am Geiste, am Geist seiner eigenen Menschlichkeit, am Geist, der durch die Sprache wirkt — nichts ist das Wort ohne den Geist, und kein anderes Lebensfeld als das Wort ist für den Geist vorhanden; wer den Geist tötet, tötet das Wort, und wer das Wort schändet, schändet den Geist, untrennbar sind sie einander verbunden. Und immer wieder verliert der Mensch die Sprache, immer wieder entgleitet ihm der Geist, entgleitet ihm das Absolute, immer wieder wird er zurückgeschleudert in das Schweigen seines düstern Urzustandes, das heute noch die Dumpfheit des Primitiven ist, in seine Grausamkeit, in sein düsteres Leid [. . .] Schwer lastet die Stummheit auf der Welt, die der Sprache und des Geistes verlustig geworden ist. (KW9/2,178)

The essay on *Geist und Zeitgeist* of 1934 was written in reaction to events in Germany and Austria and announces, between the lines, a relapse into barbarism. It contains nearly all the elements of Broch's cultural criticism: the criticism of positivism, the disintegration theory, the postulation of the decline of philosophy and theology, here fused into one, from their divine origin, the rejection of the philosophy of history in favor of an "Existenzphilosophie" (KW9/2,189); intertextual references to the story of creation and to Karl Kraus are unmistakable. The banishing of word and spirit from the paradise of divine origin and their fall from grace form the subtext of the essay. *Geist und Zeitgeist* is the paragon of a critique of the rhetorical character of language that is itself marked by rhetoric. Neither Joyce's radical deconstruction of language nor the literary avant-garde's destruction of language, nor Karl Kraus's or Friedrich Nietzsche's or Martin Heidegger's linguistic mysticism — the result of making an absolute of language and thus "Rhetorik in edelster Form" (KW9/2,193) — escape a positivistic fate; only music is able to preserve its purity (KW9/2,200).

Geist und Zeitgeist not only contains the elements of Broch's cultural criticism; it also demonstrates paradigmatically its way of functioning. There are armies of concepts that compete, come into opposition, reflection and multiple reflection, until they reach a turning point, which throws them back into orbit or makes a conclusion necessary in the form of a postulate, in the form of an All. In *Geist und Zeitgeist* Broch still sees the essence of music and the presence of spirit in the midst of polyphonic positivistic speechlessness.

Another passage taken from the second version of *Geist und Zeitgeist* serves as further evidence. It can likewise be read not only as a theoretical proposition, but also as a metaphor for the author's own writing. The

passage is about rings of values that spread out like waves over the entire globe and are encompassed by a final ring of value devoid of content:

> wenn wir andererseits sehen, dass dies keineswe[g]s eine blosse gedankliche Konstruktion ist, sondern dass die Gesamtheit der Welt, dass die Weltgeschichte tatsächlich mit einer unübersehbaren unendlichen und aberunendlichen Fülle von Wertkreisen überdeckt ist, von den Wertkreisen der Kulturepochen, der Stadt- und Landesgeschichten, den Wertkreisen des Ökonomischen, des Rechts, des Militärischen u.s.f., dargestellt in den zugehörigen Historien, wie der ökonomischen oder der Rechtsgeschichte, wenn man sieht, wie sich alle diese Wertkreise überschneiden, einander umfassen, sich schliesslich aufgliedern in den Wertkreisen der Einzelpersonen, die wieder ihrerseits, sei es als erkennende Wesen, sei es als handelnde oder führende Personen wieder in die grösseren Wertkreise eingreifen, sich in sie zu projizieren, und wenn man sieht, wie sich um all diese Wertgebilde, als deren grösster, allerdings auch als kantisch monumentalster, d.h., als völlig inhaltsentleerter und formaler Wertkreis aller Wertkreise schliesst, unter dem nichts anderes zu verstehen ist, als Hegels Weltgeist, so sehen wir in der Gesamtwelt, in der Gesamtgeschichte ein Gebilde entstehen, beinahe eine geologische Geschichte, das als System von Entsprechungen und Aber-Entsprechungen, von Spiegelungen und Gegenspiegelungen ad infinitum eine auffallende Ähnlichkeit mit der Struktur des magischen Weltbildes aufzeigt.[17]

Broch's theory of the "Plausibilitätspunkt" exhibits a structural similarity to the way his texts function. If one interprets the model of the plausibility point as movement — from the multiplicity of thing-demons in primordial times to the intuitive awareness of an original cause, God as a universal and ordering ultimate axiom, to the current state of an abstract infinity caught in the return of eternal questioning[18] — one can transfer this trans-historical law of history (Broch tempts us to use contradictory formulations) to the way the texts themselves are produced: they attempt to anchor the plausibility point in what is no longer describable (the lyrical, a new myth, the abstractionism of Broch's late style). The "Logik ihres Produziertseins"[19] however, to use Adorno's words — and this is applicable to Broch's literary works as well as to his essays — relies on a gliding of the signifiers, on the figurative character of language, which alone guarantees the fluidity of the mass of concepts. The first version of *Geist und Zeitgeist,* which is part of Broch's literary papers, speaks of the revulsion of the "philosophische Mensch":

> [. . .] der positivistische Ekel vor der Sprache, die nichts beweisen kann, sitzt ihm in der Kehle und schnürt sie ihm zu, und ein gleicher Ekel

> erfaßt ihn vor dem Hantieren mit den Begriffsmassen — mögen sie nun die "Wahrheit," "das Böse," oder auch nur "die Kausalität" heißen — die das Material der alten deduktiven Philosophie ausmachten. Es geht nicht mehr. Und wo ist der Bereich des Mystischen, des Irrationalen, in den all die philosophischen Belange, diese drängendsten Fragen des Menschen verwiesen werden sollen? ist es der Bereich des Dichterischen?[20]

The printed version reads "leergewordene Begriffe" (KW9/2,198), the relation to his own writing is effaced. In his writing Broch operated with "Begriffsmassen," with whose assistance he sought to combat the challenges of positivist philosophy, the assault of the world of things, the phenomenology of the everyday. The scene of this combat is his texts. They are in constant jeopardy of a frenzied standstill. They run the risk, in the cycle of eternal questioning, in the circulation of concepts, of running into emptiness. Consequently, the larger the conceptual effort, the larger the rhetorical, which always seeks to defer the — in this case poetic — "Plausibilitätspunkt" further and further. Broch's texts, especially the essays of cultural criticism, including the major essay on Hofmannsthal, resist becoming part of that system, part of that logic they simultaneously hope to transcend. In *Der Tod des Vergil* Broch tried to escape this dilemma by dissolving the static order of concepts through a change in narrative perspective, whereby Virgil becomes the subject and the object of the narration, the medium through which the mass of concepts flows. (The ship metaphor is one of the most powerfully effective in the book.)

III. Some Observations on the Genesis of the Text

One of the privileges of being a *Textgenetiker* is catching writers at "double-entry bookkeeping." One example of such "bookkeeping," where the ingredients have not yet been cooked to a finished dish, occurs in drafts of the chapter "Die Wertwirklichkeit der Epoche" from the essay *Zur Erkenntnis dieser Zeit* from the years 1917 to 1919. The pages of this draft display a vertical division: on the left is a text typed on a typewriter and on the right a handwritten translation, commentary, continuation — its translation into another type of discourse. A look into his workshop makes clear what is always a condition of Broch's writing: the division of an unruly will to expression into various forms of discourse such as commentary, letter, academic paper, or poetry, or into various rhetorical strategies. The discourses determine one another, are inseparable, as the example shows, even though there are certainly differ-

ent phases in Broch's work in which variously science, poetry, philosophy or politics takes priority. The example that follows concerns the question of the unity of the practical experience and theoretical awareness of the time (the experience of the First World War). Parallel to the rhetorical input with the character of an appeal — "wir, die wir . . ." — is the rationalization of the series of questions. Broch usually included the rhetorical appeal of a series of questions directly into his essays and literary works as a corrective to the mass of concepts. In the best essays of cultural criticism the traces are rubbed away, the series of questions is absorbed in a whirl of conceptually saturated language. *Geist und Zeitgeist* is an outstanding example of this process. Here the components are still separated:

Typescript:

> Wir, die wir diese Zeit erleben, sind nicht wahnsinnig geworden — wenn wir auch diese Zeit, platt genug, eine irrsinnige genannt haben —, sind nicht wahnsinnig: begreifen wir sie deswegen? genügt es die Fakten dieser Wirklichkeit aufzuzählen, um diese Wirklichkeit zu verstehen?

Manuscript:

> Die theoretischen Konzeptionen, die zum Begreifen der Notwendigkeit dieser Wirklichkeit führen sollen, stehen in keinem Verhältnis, ja nicht einmal in einem Zusammenhang mit den psychologischen Gründen, — wobei notabene psychologische Gründe niemals wirkliche Erklärungen [sein können] — mit denen die Widersinnigkeit des Geschehens logisiert wurden [. . .] Zwischen diesem Erleben und diesem sehr — sagen wir selbst irrsinnigen — Akt des kausalierenden Begreifen besteht ein autonomer Zusammenhang, dessen Analyse Aufgabe der Untersuchung werden soll.[. . .] Das eigentlich treibende Agens zur Problemstellung ist die Disparatheit des Geschehens, jene Disparatheit zwischen dem sogenannt natürlichen, nach Glückseligkeit strebenden Wollens des Individuums u. zwischen der ihm auferlegten u. doch von ihm geschaffenen [. . .][21]

Translations constantly occur between the forms of discourse. If *Die Schlafwandler* was about the integration of the essay "Zerfall der Werte" into a novel, then the essays are about a dynamism of the static mass of concepts by means of *poetic* techniques.

The literature on Broch pointed out early on how fluid the boundary between philosophy and poetry was at the time *Die Schlafwandler* was composed. Evidence of this is also present in the literary papers from the genesis of *Die Schlafwandler:*

Typescript:

Damals begann ich wieder zu dichten. D.h. ich machte Versuche und verwarf sie am nächsten Tage.

Handwritten Correction:

Damals begann ich mich wieder mit meinen geschichtsphilosophischen Arbeiten über den Zerfall der Werte zu beschäftigen. Obwohl ich kaum aus dem Hause ging, brachte ich die Arbeit nur langsam vorwärts.[22]

Printed Edition:

Zu meiner eigenen Verwunderung hatte ich wieder begonnen, mich mit meinen geschichtsphilosophischen Arbeiten über den Wertzerfall zu beschäftigen. (KW1,488)

A brief digression on different concepts of text as applied in *Editionswissenschaft* may clarify the above.

The varying concepts of text used by philologists and *Textgenetiker* (classic German *Editionswissenschaft* and French *critique génétique*) may be presented with the aid of the Aristotelian concepts "poiesis," i.e., the goal-oriented production of a separate work, and "praxis," that is, a process whose aim is not separate from itself. According to this model, philologists consider the process of writing a literary work poiesis, that is, the production of a work whose end product is essentially superior to the activity that led to its realization. *Généticiens,* on the contrary, tend to understand writing as "praxis," that is, as an activity whose significance is not separate from itself and is therefore superior to what is produced out of it.[23] On the level of production, of the manner of writing, this distinction corresponds to product-oriented and process-oriented writing. Broch's numerous plans and commentaries on his own work, especially the flood of letters in which he comments on and explains his work, and the embedding of all that in the context of a theoretical rationale, prove Broch to be a product-oriented writer. The texts' potential incompleteness on the other hand, the compulsion to write, and the endless processes of reworking the texts are characteristic of process-oriented writing. Theodore Ziolkowski has already pointed out that *Die Schlafwandler* exemplifies literature as work and thus the modern novel in general.[24] The ending of the Huguenau part consisted of four different versions, which Broch synthesized. In this medial position between poiesis and praxis, between product and process, the ambivalence mentioned at the outset becomes tangible once more.

IV. Conclusions

a) The new myth is not objectively producible, it is ultimately a hope for salvation: "aber ich weiß, dass derjenige, der kommen wird, weil er kommen muß, sich in sehr einfachen Worten äußern wird, in Worten, die nichts mit Kunst zu schaffen haben, oder höchstens so weit, als sie reine Lyrik sein können," writes Broch in a letter to Ivan Goll dated 2 September 1945 (KW13/3,16). A glimpse of the Coming One is contained in the "Rhythmus der Ideen," in what lies between idea and idea and cannot be fixed at either one or the other pole. Broch also recorded it with the formula "Nicht mehr und noch nicht." Precisely herein lies the fascination with Broch's work to this day, it is what constitutes the work's quality, and it is precisely here where the criticism begins as well. For the purity of knowledge, the postulated suspension of all opposition in an "irdisch Absoluten" has its price.

The texts are governed by a logic of exclusion that displays traces similar to those of the Freudian model of the psyche in Derrida's deconstructionist readings. In Broch's case it is expressed as criticism of the linguistic experiment as *l'art pour l'art* (apparent from his estimation of Dadaism and expressionism), as criticism of the empirical life (of the "zweibeinige Menschengewimmel") as opposed to the *pure* idea, as criticism of flesh-and-blood woman in favor of immaculate, spiritual woman (in *Psychische Selbstbiographie*) or as the exclusion of certain topics from his literary works: "was bedeutet es, sexuelle, soziale oder sonst welche private Angelegenheiten literarisch zu behandeln? Nichts und aber nichts!" (KW9/2, 196); or finally as the exclusion of the idea of the Other in a foreign culture, which Broch the exile experienced personally as enrichment but seldom made the subject of his writing. Broch repeatedly stressed the horizons that exile opened that would have otherwise remained inaccessible. And yet it is astonishing how little any sense of being physically present in the New World enters into his work from his time in exile. A significant portion of this work consisted of letters, a communicative network that continually expanded. How little one finds there of New York's tides of traffic, of the city's overwhelming architecture, the machines, automobiles, services and so forth. Rather, during the war years Broch repeatedly expressed his fears of a fascist America (KW13/2,63). In a letter to Willa Muir of December 1938 he writes:

> Von N.Y. habe ich demgemäß auch nicht viel gesehen, doch was ich gesehen habe, ist imponierend. Natürlich ist dieses Leben nicht unser Leben, aber es ist eben das der modernen Stadt schlechthin, und das Leben im Kollektiv schlechthin, verpönbar also, dennoch großartig,

> und mit allen Gefahren des Nazitums durchsetzt, wenn eben nicht noch rechtzeitig eingegriffen wird. (KW13/2,43)

And on 11 July 1939 Broch even writes to Abraham Sonne, "ich kann sagen, dass ich bereits nach 48 Stunden gewusst habe, mich in einem Land zu befinden, dessen Struktur dem vorhitlerischen Deutschland geradezu photographisch gleicht" (KW13/2,96). Or one day later to Jolande Jacobi: "und wenn da der liebe Gott nicht noch persönlich eingreift, so kann es hier einen Wahnsinnsausbruch geben, der bei diesen extravertierten Kindern noch ganz andere Dimensionen annehmen dürfte als in dem immerhin introvertiert gezügelten Europa" (KW13/2,99).

This attitude may be understandable considering the war, but it is also representative of Broch's refusal to allow the complex texture of *reality* to ruin the reality of the concept. It is not only explicable by reference to the cultural bond to the Old World (a bond evident in the case of many other emigrants as well), or to existential worries, which take precedence over everything; it is a precondition of Broch's production system to exclude the Other of sensuous life, not to let it near because it could cause everything to finally collapse. Broch wrote to Hans Sahl on 6 August 1943 that the "Nabelschnur" between the work and the person must be completely severed, that the work must be purified of any narcissistic residue, that no remains of personality whatsoever should be present in the perfect work of art, whereby — via a dialectic turnaround — translation into the work is first made completely possible: "nur mit völlig überwundenem Narzissmus wird Selbstbiographie zum Kunstwerk, wird zur Welt und ihrer Totalität" (KW13/2,341). What results, however, is that the Other is averted *ex negativo,* through non-perception.

And yet the excluded penetrates again through the crevices in the realm of writing, it settles in the language. Broch's texts are constituted through acts of exclusion and division, which only in the rotation of ever-higher spinning spirals allow a reunion in a higher state. In the *Hofmannsthal* essay Broch speaks of the present "Weltaugenblick," which has thrown mankind "schicksalszermalmt" back to the "Magie des Anfangs": "wieder hat ihn die Nüchternheit hilfloser Auslöschung übermannt." "Und doch," now comes the image of an upward swing, it is "eine höhere Zermalmtheit, eine höhere Magie, eine höhere Nüchternheit" (KW9/1,241–42).

Resistance to the overall pressure of colonization and domestication has prompted fundamental revision of views of the unconscious and

language in recent decades. Julia Kristeva sees the speechless stage of infancy in the pre-oedipal phase as characterized by an anarchistic flood of energy and drives. The entry into the symbolic system of language is associated with a repression of the semiotic, as Kristeva describes this unregulated economy of drives. Yet the conflict between fixed and fixing meanings and the semiotic never turns out completely to the advantage of the symbolic system. Terry Eagleton writes "for the semiotic can still be discerned as a kind of pulsional pressure within language itself, in tone, rhythm, the bodily and material qualities of language, but also in contradiction, meaninglessness, disruption, silence and absence. The semiotic is the 'other' of language which is nonetheless intimately entwined with it."[25]

The "Rhythmus der Ideen" in Broch's case should be discernible in the accelerated rhythm of concepts. Rhythm, mirror, wave, echo: these are the main metaphors in the texts, which in continually new emphases confront the concepts of value, system, architecture/architectonics, deduction etc. Yet the excluded returns, the empire strikes back. In the rhetorical figures intended to avert the Other with an often astonishing vehemence, in the movement of the texts it returns; it is also evident in Broch's letters or in parts of his work not intended for publication, drafts, notebooks, etc. Broch's system of texts is equipped with vents that let off the steam of what cannot be integrated. In his early work, for example, the notebooks form such a vent, where — with Weininger's mannerism and in the aphoristic form typical of Kraus — the language, uncensored and without constraint, breaks free: "Sei nicht zu geistreich! Dies ist der Grund, warum Du es nicht zur großen Schauspielerin bringst. Das Weib ist nicht geistreich. Werde Weib, voll Sentiment und Pose und Du wirst die große Schauspielerin sein."[26]

b)

> Die politischen Wert-Formen stehen methodologisch zwischen denen der Wissenschaft, deren innere Logizität derart sachgebunden ist, dass der wissenschaftliche Arbeiter prinzipiell immer anonym bleibt, und denen der Kunst, deren Produkte absolut subjektgebunden sind, und erhalten sie von der einen Seite her den Charakter der "Unentrinnbarkeit" (historische Notwendigkeit), so lässt sich von der andern (der subjektiv betonten) Seite her die Möglichkeit von "Fehlleistungen" konstatieren, eine Möglichkeit, ohne die wir ja sonst für immer und ewig zum politischen Fatalismus verdammt wären. (KW13/2,174)

Broch argues art's bond to its subject as a remedy against the inescapable logic of the scientific. (At the beginning of the forties Broch starts to

work intensively on his theory of mass psychology.) Its "Fehlleistungen" allow it to break out of the deterministic cycle of science. Broch's texts produce permanent slips, precisely where the scientific pretense is greatest, or where the irrefutable certainty of a logical argument is emphasized. Art in a broader sense acquires the function of a necessary corrective, whereby the concept of "Fehlleistung" in the letter quoted above becomes once again double-charged: Broch brings it up in connection with Hitler's demand for a radical restatement of values, which would appear as absurd to us as a work of art we no longer comprehend. Such double-charged concepts are typical with Broch. The most explicit example occurs in the papers on kitsch, where Christ and the Antichrist are quite similar in their manifestations, though they differ from one another radically in their ethical dimensions.

c) The need for theory increases in the art of modernism, indeed, as Karlheinz Stierle polemically formulated it, art still has perhaps only one lasting function: "eine Theoriebedürftigkeit zu erzeugen, die der Kunstphilosophie zur Bühne verhilft."[27] Broch the poet offers Broch the philosopher and art critic a stage, and vice versa. With every stance he takes in his writing, with every genre he pushes to its limits, Broch creates a deficiency, a need on the other side. Broch is a maker of art and a philosopher of art in one like only few other modern writers. To be sure, Broch's numerous self-commentaries, particularly on *Die Verzauberung* and on *Der Tod des Vergil,* are owing to the difficult circumstances with respect to their publication, but the plethora of commentaries in his letters, which consistently develop into long, theoretical digressions on art, makes them an integral part of his work. *Der Tod des Vergil* is a hermetic work of art, which in a paradigmatic way seems to demand commentary, indeed, begs the question of whether it can even exist without commentary. The commentary has a tendency to place itself in the position of the work, which has to do in turn with the inherent elitism of modern art and with the inevitable resulting problems of conveyance. In this sense Broch touches upon questions that decisively influence art today. Broch says the simple complexly, precisely because the simple has become so complex, but at the same time he wants this complicatedness to dissolve again into the completely simple, and for this to happen, it takes complicated textual operations and so on.

d) In the article by Karlheinz Stierle mentioned above, which asks the question, "Hat der Klassizismus eine Zukunft?" the author develops toward the end a model of an advanced classicism. The model is oriented toward Hans Blumenberg's concept of "genetischer Platonismus," which still assumes ideas, but ideas that have "zwar einen Ursprung, aber kein

Ende." Stierle concludes with a statement that characterizes Broch's dilemma perfectly: "Wenn die Kunst sich aus den Fallstricken eines hegelianisch inspirierten Modernismus und ästhetischen Nihilismus befreit, wird sie ihren Auftrag im Zeichen eines dialektischen, unendlich fortzuschreibenden Klassizismus wiedererkennen."[28] Broch's eclecticism, his recourse to antique models, the variety of his ways of expressing himself and of his writing styles, his permanent "Fehlleistungen" make Broch the critic of classicism a model example of such a broadly conceived notion of classicism. At least to an equal degree, however, Broch exhibits the tendency to impose on ideas not only an origin, but also an end. Then from the "genetische" comes a dogmatic Platonism, which no longer relies on the corrective of "Fehlleistungen." A productive reading of Broch today would elaborate precisely this element of simultaneous closing and opening in the texts.

Translated by Michael Huffmaster

Notes

[1] The literature on Broch has raised the question to what extent the author can be classified as modern or postmodern. See Paul Michael Lützeler, *Die Entropie des Menschen. Studien zum Werk Hermann Brochs,* (Würzburg: Könighausen & Neumann, 2000), 15. The ambivalent character of Broch's definitions complicates the answer. In his use of the concepts "l'art pour l'art" and "avant-garde" Broch does not sharply distinguish between artistic autonomy and literary practice. See Viktor Žmegač, "Kunst und Ethik," in: *Brochs theoretisches Werk,* ed. Paul Michael Lützeler (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1988), 16.

[2] Hermann Broch, *Psychische Selbstbiographie,* ed. Paul Michael Lützeler (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1999).

[3] See Lützeler, *Die Entropie des Menschen,* 15 and Otto Peter Obermeier, "Das Konstruktionsprinzip in der Wertphilosophie," in: *Brochs theoretisches Werk,* 100 and passim.

[4] Niklas Luhmann, *Gesellschaftsstruktur und Semantik. Studien zur Wissenssoziologie der modernen Gesellschaft,* vol. 4 (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1995), 88. (Henceforth cited as "Luhmann.")

[5] In his essay "Zu Brochs Symbolbegriff," in: *Brochs theoretisches Werk,* 39, Richard Brinkmann points out that Broch's concept of the symbol can also be substituted by that of the sign.

[6] "Entwurf zur Massenpsychologie I," unpub. Yale University Library (YUL). See also *Massenwahntheorie* (KW12,49–50) and the essay on kitsch (KW9/2,168).

[7] Luhmann, 97. Pierre Bourdieu, *Die Regeln der Kunst. Genese und Struktur des literarischen Feldes* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1999), 430: "Die wahrscheinliche Zukunft des Feldes ist stets in der Struktur des Feldes schon enthalten, aber jeder

Akteur gestaltet seine eigene Zukunft — mit der er zur Zukunft des Feldes beiträgt — durch das Realisieren objektiver Potentialitäten, über die in der Beziehung zwischen seinen eigenen Kräften und den im Feld objektiv enthaltenen Möglichkeiten entschieden wird."

[8] Niklas Luhmann, *Die Kunst der Gesellschaft* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1995), 231.

[9] Luhmann, *Gesellschaftsstruktur,* 60.

[10] Luhmann, *Kunst,* 233.

[11] This is not only true of his early work which was influenced by Weininger, Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, as an aphorism from an unpublished notebook indicates; the date of around 1920 can be assumed, as given by H. F Broch de Rothermann: "Es kommt lediglich darauf an, ob man ein 'führender Geist' sein will, oder bloß ein Bücherschreiber. (Führende Geister haben oft das Bedürfnis gefühlt, sich durch ‚Bücherschreiben' verständlich zu machen — vielleicht auch zur Lösung des Verantwortungsdruckes, Flucht ins Spiel, ins Meskine)." See notebook unpub. YUL.

[12] Luhmann, *Gesellschaftsstruktur,* 96.

[13] Lützeler, *Die Entropie des Menschen,* 33–44. The deconstruction countercorresponds to the design of the figure of the mason Gödicke; see 43.

[14] Notebook, unpub. YUL, 58–60.

[15] See Monika Ritzer, *Hermann Broch und die Kulturkrise im frühen 20. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1988), esp. 32–34.

[16] See a fragment of "Pamphlet gegen die Hochschätzung des Menschen," unpub. YUL, 2: "Nur der Verworfene kennt erotische Probleme. Verworfen deswegen, weil sie kein Problem in sich bergen. Und tiefe Verwandtschaft besteht zwischen dem Begriff des 'Menschenschicksals' und diesem verruchten Scheinproblem. Denn das simple Resultat jenes simplen Aktes ist der Mensch in seiner ganzen, materialen, individuellen Schäbigkeit und an diese materiale Schäbigkeit des Menschentiers ist der Begriff des Menschenschicksals gebunden. Man missverstehe uns nicht: wohl ist des Menschen, wohl ist die Würde des Menschen das letzte Ziel [. . .] Aber dieser Begriff des Menschen ist nicht eingespannt zwischen körperlicher Geburt und körperlichem Tod, seine Tragik ist die des Erkennens, nicht die des Sterbens, und seine Würde ist die des Zeitlosen apriori [. . .]."

[17] Second version of "Geist und Zeitgeist," unpub. YUL, 17–18.

[18] See Obermeier, "Das Konstruktionsprinzip in der Wertphilosophie," 101–2.

[19] Theodor W. Adorno, "Valérys Abweichungen," in: Adorno, *Noten zur Literatur* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1981), 159.

[20] First version of "Geist und Zeitgeist," unpub. YUL; see also the printed version (KW9/2,198).

[21] Unpub. YUL, not paginated.

[22] Typescript uv. YUL, 132; see also Typescript, 166: "Wenn man dichten will, gibt man auf die Aussenwelt nicht acht." Handwritten Correction/Printed Version: "Man mag die Philosophische Betätigung einschätzen, wie man will, es wird die Aussenwelt doch unansehnlich und weniger bemerkenswert" (KW1,511).

[23] Klaus Hurlebusch, "Den Autor besser verstehen: aus seiner Arbeitsweise. Prolegomenon zu einer Hermeneutik textgenetischen Schreibens," in: *editio 10. Textgenetische Edition* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1998), 15.

[24] Theodore Ziolkowski, "Zur Entstehung und Struktur von Hermann Brochs *Schlafwandlern,*" in: *Materialien zu Hermann Brochs "Die Schlafwandler,"* edited by Gisela Brude-Firnau (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1972), 151.

[25] Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory. An Introduction* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983), 188.

[26] Unpub. YUL, 80.

[27] Karlheinz Stierle, "Überzähliges Dasein entspringen lassen. Beantwortung der Frage: Hat der Klassizismus eine Zukunft?" *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* 30 (31 December 2000): 7.

[28] Stierle, 7.

"Kurzum die Hölle": Broch's Early Political Text "Die Straße"

Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler

I

WRITTEN IN 1918, BROCH'S "Die Straße" (KW13/1,30–35)[1] is not only one of the author's most interesting and enigmatic essays, it is also one of the most important literary documents showing how Austrian authors dealt with the consequences of the First World War, a war that in Robert Musil's words tore "Welt und Denken" so completely asunder that they could not be mended again.[2] The text is also rather strange from our point of view, particularly the apodictic judgments it pronounces on Judaism and socialism, suggesting at least a hint of deviation from political correctness. On the other hand, the text does contain in essence much of what determined the political and literary discourse of Austria during the First Republic, a fundamentally different discourse from that of the Weimar Republic. As early as 1973 Paul Michael Lützeler dedicated a thorough study to Broch's text, examining the aspect of the "Auseinandersetzung mit dem Marxismus."[3] I base my observations here on Lützeler's work, which I would like to complement with an analysis of the text's specific rhetoric, elucidating in the process its peculiar amalgamation of individual theses and viewpoints. From here I move to the literature of Broch's Austrian contemporaries in order to highlight the text's unique features against this background. I then point out the traces of Broch's thoughts about the upheaval of 1918 discernible in the third part of the *Schlafwandler* trilogy. Finally, I indicate with the aid of pertinent examples the profound ramifications of the text's pithy closing sentence, that the "Politische die letzte und böseste Verflachung des Menschen [ist]" (KW13/1,34), and I discuss its relevance for literature beyond Broch's work.

II

Hardly any journal in Austria after 1918 could have guaranteed Broch's thought the exclusivity it required as well as *Die Rettung*. For not only what Broch said, but also the way he said it, was not at all in accord with the style in which one discussed the events of that November, especially the proclamation of the Republic. Broch's text "Die Straße" derives its dynamic from the numerous paradoxes that dominate the tone in Franz Blei's and Albert Paris Gütersloh's journal, whose title, "Die Rettung," implied the notion of salvation. All possible positions were approached with an attitude of detachment, with a degree of distance — though certainly unequal — toward Christianity and toward communism as well. The speaker here (not to be identified with the individual Hermann Broch) rejects all alternatives that provoked the most heated controversies at the time. Whether imperial or republican, whether the "Wacht am Rhein" or the "Marseillaise" was a matter of indifference, although Broch himself, like Musil, does confess an uncanny shiver at all these patriotic impulses, a choked-up feeling, "gerührt und erschüttert" (KW13/1,30). At the same time this shock, this reaction of horror, is not to be considered a consequence of "Ästhetisiererei" (KW13/1,31), apparently in this stage one of the common evils of the epoch.

The pivotal statement in the first part of Broch's text is, significantly, placed in brackets: "Ich bin mit jeder Art kommunistischer Wirtschaft von vornherein einverstanden, wie sie einzurichten die Welt für gut findet. Keinerlei Besitz besitzt mich" (KW13/1,30).[4] A proper distance is thus established to the propertied class, to the bourgeoisie and the philistines, but at the same time the figura etymologica speaks to a paradox: the possession possesses and so does not make one free and independent. Such a statement assumes particular importance in view of Broch's decisive sale of his father's business.

Broch distances himself radically not only from Christianity, but from every type of community, because they simply do not satisfy his requirement of an uncompromising recognition: "Das gemeinsame Gebet steht jedem, dem das Gott-Erkennen wie jedes Erkennen eine Angelegenheit der stets brückenlosen und immer ohne Hilfe bleiben müssenden Person ist, auf unterer Stufe" (KW13/1,31). Individual concepts are dismantled from paragraph to paragraph: first it is the masses, whereas the "hohl erregte Masse" is distinguished from the "national erregte Menge" (KW13/1,31). The next step is the condemnation of the community, which is simply dismissed as "eine menschliche Entartung" (KW13/1,31), and even worse the masses are not a "Ge-

meinschaft" at all. The community in any case is a human value, not a "geistiger Wert" (Broch 1981, 32). But the masses lack — so the somewhat excursive line of thought — a collective metaphysical "Wahrheitsgefühl," as they are "skeptisch und damit jüdisch" (KW13/1,32). The question of whether a trait inherited from Weininger might not perhaps be showing through here is difficult to suppress. The surprising conclusion: that the idea of freedom becomes "so inhaltslos, so dreckig, so sehr die Forderung nach dem 'Genuß' der Freiheit [. . .], daß es einem den Magen umkehrt" (KW13/1,32). These words represent the most vicious attack on the radical changes of 1918, which are cast not as the transformation of a political system, but rather as the degradation of an idea, and this owing to "Genuß," that partly so praised, partly so criticized Austrian principle of hedonism. Freedom appears here not as a value in and of itself, but rather — and in this respect Broch is very much a Kantian — as a problematic tendency.

Again an assumption follows that is not deduced, but simply declared: the "Dogmatisierung und Verhunzung der Idee" is "notwendig"[5] (KW13/1,32), as if the process were to be seen as part of the "gräßlichen Fatalismus der Geschichte" attested to so compellingly by Büchner.[6] "Politisches Wollen" manifests itself as the political, now the target of Broch's attacks. The consequence of this: "Sturz und Verluderung in der billigen Ekstase der Masse" (KW13/1,33). The structure where the social democratic worker has his place is also summarily dismissed: "Dogmatismus und Genuß sind die konstituierenden Bestandteile des Philisters und Bourgeois, und damit reiht sich der sozialdemokratische Arbeiter dort ein, wohin er seiner Ideologie nach gehört: als letzter Schwanz der Bourgeoisie und damit als letzter Imitator einer vergangenen Gemeinschaftskultur. Mit dem sozialdemokratischen Arbeiter beginnt nicht eine neue, sondern kommt die alte Gemeinschaft in ihre letzte notwendige Schmach" (KW13/1,33f.).

A rejection of the accomplishments of Austria's Social Democrats, so emphatically accepted by so many and later so lauded for their improvements in the social realm, could not have been more clearly enunciated. The condemnation of social democracy follows from the condemnation of the community; history appears as a process of disintegration: "Nur die allerroheste Behauung des Geistigen und des Wortes ist noch möglich, denn es muß auf offener Straße vom Balkon der Masse zugeschrien werden. Die christliche Gemeinschaft hatte zu diesem Zweck noch die Kirchenpredigt, so dogmatisch auch diese sein mag. Die gemeinschaftliche Masse hat nur ein paar in die Straße gebrüllte Vokabeln, Silben von Vokabeln" (KW13/1,34).

Here the title word, "Straße," appears for the first time and with it a recollection of the scene the "Ich" had fled. Finally then, now as something inescapable, there stands the political, "die letzte und böseste Verflachung des Menschen. Das radikal Böse als notwendige Folge der Dogmatisierung des Sittlichen schlechthin. Kurzum die Hölle" (KW13/1,34). Unfortunately, this "Dogmatisierung des Sittlichen" is not explained, as though it were self-evident. The speaker addresses Franz Blei in conclusion, whose Catholicism — propounded at the time with an antagonistic accent — would certainly produce different results from those of Broch's considerations: the events taking place had to be understood as "notwendige Aufräumungsarbeit, um den Glauben vorzubereiten," to prepare a "Wiedererwachung des Wissens um die Verbundenheit aller Dinge im Metaphysischen" (KW13/1,34).

The essay ends aporetically: no manifesto, no instructions as how to behave or act, no avowal. History appears as an unstoppable decline, of which Broch lists the individual stages, beginning with the Church's feeling of community (clearly well back in the Middle Ages) and continuing through nationalism and on to socialism, whereby the former is conceded more dignity than the latter.

This short essay stands completely apart from the other texts that treat the radical changes occurring in 1918 in Austria. Nearly every sentence seems aimed at preventing the author's position from being plotted anywhere on a political scale. Central to the text are concepts of major importance in Broch's later writings: the masses, devaluation, dogmatization, and the political. The text's peculiar rhetoric serves to nullify all alternatives simultaneously and to orient the entire development of history toward this superficiality of the political. With uncanny consistency Broch seems to avoid any indication of the concrete. Indeed, the "reale Geschehen" — to use Musil's expression[7] — is all but completely extinguished: a brief reminder of the scenes in front of Parliament, an equally brief reference to Kurt Eisner, murdered not long afterwards, and a brief reference to Franz Werfel's philanthropy. The attempt to delete almost all concrete traces of the historical events is a phenomenon that can be observed in many authors, but nowhere else is such a categorical condemnation of the political formulated.

III

It seems appropriate to differentiate Broch's diagnosis of the street from those of his important, as well as his less important, contemporaries. Broch appears to have sought a place equidistant from all positions, a

place where no one could attack him. But only a cursory consideration would lead one to assess all the author's reactions to the events as apolitical, for especially in Broch's case, it is precisely in condemning the political so ruthlessly that he reveals his keen interest. This is also true, however — mutatis mutandis — of Hofmannsthal and Schnitzler, who are generally considered the chief witnesses of the Habsburg myth and thus of a stance that negates the present. They simulate continuity in their works, insofar as they allow the society of the monarchy before its downfall to operate more or less intact. This is true of all of Schnitzler's work after 1918, and it is true of Hofmannsthal's comedies such as *Der Schwierige* (1921) and *Der Unbestechliche* (1922). A close reading, however, reveals how the controversies as well as the shocks caused by the fall of the monarchy are present in these texts, though subtly transformed. Schnitzler's *Fräulein Else* (1924) is clearly set at the turn of the century, but the author deals with a subject that was *en vogue* during the time of inflation: a young girl has to salvage her parents' finances, a story Hofmannsthal's *Arabella* also depicted so vividly somewhat later. Hofmannsthal's *Der Unbestechliche* is a disguised comedy about the revolution; the title, after all, comes from Robespierre's appellation, *L'Incorruptible,* and it is the servant, the exemplary servant, who teaches his decadent masters mores, saves his dandy lord's marriage, prances around like a moral rigorist and then in the end is dismissed, though still zealously puritanical and so quite ludicrous.[8] *Der Schwierige* is far more subtle. The story takes place during the last winter of the First World War, and Hofmannsthal systematically excluded everything from the play that might have recalled the unpleasant present, the menacing changes, particularly the insubordinate servant Vincenz, who as an allegorical representative of the proletarian revolution is properly rejected.

The present is in these texts, as well as in Hofmannsthal's tragedy *Der Turm,* which ends with a military Kaiser's vision of horror, such as Oswald Spengler had foreseen. Robert Musil assumes a certain distance toward the new situation as well, although most of the works he wrote can also be read as variations of the theme of the extensive changes in the social and political structure. A retrospective focus does not strictly translate into avoidance of the present. The refusal to engage contemporary problems seems to follow from a poetic attitude that considers a story presentable only when, to use Thomas Mann's formulation, it is "mit historischem Edelrost überzogen."[9] To address subjects such as inflation or border realignments seemed simply unrefined to Schnitzler, and he felt these were issues for the more serious, in particular for Mann, the serious German.

The authors whose books enjoyed widespread circulation, however, such as Hugo Bettauer, Felix Dörmann, or Karl Hans Strobl for example, did not subscribe to such a poetic attitude. Like Johannes Mario Simmel today, they felt current events, the present reality, to be the key to truth, and thus they wrote about the economic crisis, about inflation, or about the revolution. A classic example is the novel *Repablick* by a certain Karl Huffnagl-Paumgartten, published in 1925. "Repablick" is the dialectical distortion of "republic," and it is with an unpleasant — anti-Semitic, anti-Slavic and anti-Magyar — satirical gesture that the author depicts the day of the proclamation of the Republic.[10] Despite the coincidence of the subject matter, the novel represents the most extreme contrast conceivable to that of Broch's portrayal of the event. Characteristic of most of the author's positions is a disturbed relation to reality, one that depicts everything that occurs as ghastly. Demons, spirits, and ghosts abound: *Gespenster in der Stadt* is the title of a novel by Thaddäus Rittner, *Gespenster im Sumpf* a novel by Karl Hans Strobl. Karl Kraus writes in the poem "Wien" from 1922: "Moderluft erfüllt die Gasse, / denn es leben nur Gespenster. / Um zu atmen, rat ich, lasse, / schleunig schließen alle Fenster!"[11] Kraus's text "Nachruf" in the *Fackel* issue of January 25, 1919 is in fact less about the present, about the social upheavals at the time, than about the war, which had been overcome, and the monarchy, which had been overcome as well. The question of governmental reform is not a question at all — the decision was unequivocally for the Republic, and the officers appear as "Wiedergänger," as revenants, the undead, one of the central topoi of Austrian literature all the way up to Elfriede Jelinek's *Die Kinder der Toten* (1995).

The setting — in contrast to Jelinek's later novels — is Vienna. Vienna is the place where the dead celebrate their joyous primordial condition, the place of change — for some a change to the new, for others a catastrophe. And the place of change is the street. Hugo Bettauer's novel *Die freudlose Gasse* belongs in this context thanks to the film version, where the street is employed cinematically for the first time: the mob is pictured, hungry, moving through the street.

> Die Straße wird in der bildenden Kunst nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg zum Schauplatz des Totentanzes einer Epoche. Großstadt- und Straßenvisionen als Zeichen und Signale eines kapitalistischen Babel — die Straße als Symbol der Lebensangst, zugleich auch des Verfalls und der Auflösung. Aber auch, wie etwa bei Otto Dix, Metapher einer realistischen Sehnsucht, für den Drang nach einer außerbürgerlichen Welt. Grunes Film ['Die Straße'] steht im engen und stilistischen Kontext zu solchen Kunstphänomenen.[12]

It is not only since the end of the First World War that the street and madness have been related. The street is filled with mentally ill, and it is the street that causes mental illness. One of Heimito von Doderer's early texts, his "1. Divertimento" from 1924, provides a revealing parallel to Broch's "Die Straße." The story centers on a bread riot that led to havoc and destruction in downtown Vienna. Adrian, a young man from a good family, meets a café cashier ("Sitzkassiererin"), whose mental illness is triggered by this uprising. Adrian feels that the revolt comes from within himself, while simultaneously aware that, though he had no part in the masses' actions, he is nevertheless swept away by them: "Es war wie eine Fortsetzung seiner selbst gewesen: ein Band aus seinem Innern, ja, hier innen festgemacht, das am anderen Ende dort außen mit hunderten von Fäusten raste." He staggers "wie in einem bösen Traum durch diese Hölle."[13] His girlfriend Rufina, the café cashier, subsequently goes insane, and he visits her in the psychiatric clinic. She is convinced, and has been since long before she was committed, that the "menschliche Entwertung" (a nod toward Broch here) has occurred: "Ich Rufina Seifert bekenne daß ich durch menschliche Entwertung schuldig bin an allem was den Leuten geschehen ist."[14] The devaluation of money, devaluation of woman, devaluation of mankind are shown here. The one who is predisposed to psychological anguish experiences personally the catastrophe of social misery, of radical change, and she feels guilty, though she knows herself to be innocent.

The street has destroyed the human soul. The street, and the public space it creates, are the opposite of that *douceur du foyer* where the individual could retreat to find salvation. At the end of the story we witness the terminally ill Rufina in an insane asylum, while Adrian finds his way back (not let off without bitter irony from the narrator, to be sure) to the cultivated and philistine atmosphere of the middle class.

IV

Despite the conspicuous parallels, Broch's brief text clearly stands apart from the attitude more evident in the texts of the other authors. The concrete problems, such as the famine, or the degradation of the officer class and the bourgeoisie, are hardly even addressed. All the real problems, arising from the precarious situation are placed away on a metaphysical shelf, to put it somewhat maliciously. In this stream of paradoxes the concrete situation, in every economic, social and political respect, is gradually and very clearly deflected out of the text. This fact suited well the environment where the text came to be situated, in Franz Blei's and

Albert Paris Gütersloh's *Die Rettung*. Here, following Blei's motto, one could accommodate communism and the Catholic Church, an intellectual *coup de main* that in its very audacity was quite capable of bringing the real conflicts to a rather precarious standstill. Blei and Gütersloh still endorsed the social democrats in the election of 1919, though the endorsement was also based on the principle of *faute de mieux;* in this land of political illiteracy the social democrats would at least master the art of reading and writing; a vote for them would therefore be a reasonable one. Broch's stance, however, differed substantially from the smug ideological tightrope Blei walked. His paradoxes aim at the political as the inescapable; no one and nothing eludes it. An outright pessimistic forecast is therefore made not only for the Weimar Republic, but also for the minor Republic of Austria. In this sense Broch's text also seems to me to be central to his later writings, and not only for his theoretical but for his narrative works as well.

Though a detailed discussion of the evidence would be beyond the scope of this paper, it does seem to me that "Die Straße" lays out the basic model for the third part of the *Schlafwandler* trilogy, *1918. Huguenau oder Sachlichkeit*. I do not thereby mean to suggest, however, that the early text is quasi a treatise-like cocoon out of which the beautiful butterfly of the novel was later to emerge. Pasenow, the Romantic, and Esch, who becomes a Bible-following mutant Catholic: in short, two Christians who gather their different religious experiences in different ways, but who both arrive at a similar conclusion. Esch and Pasenow partake of this "Werterlebnis" in Bible class, of which Broch speaks in "Die Straße"; their "Werterlebnis" is largely based on that "billige Ekstase des gemeinsamen Rhythmus, auf jener erkenntnislosen billigen Hilfe, von der beispielsweise das Christentum als Kult ganz erfüllt [ist]" (KW13/1,31). Granted, the severity of this judgment certainly does not apply to Esch and Pasenow in the same degree, yet the level on which they stand in their evolution into religious persons is clearly denounced. They still embrace the "Wesentliche der Gemeinschaft," as it is called in "Die Straße," that is, the collective metaphysical feeling of truth and the grounding of "der letzten Einsichten in einem Glauben"; and at the same time they do seem to be guilty of that "Dogmatisierung der Ursachenreihen" so vehemently criticized by Broch. Broch shows the way that leads to the political and thus to the last stage of human superficiality. It is an "Erkenntnisabfall" that occurs here, in both senses of the word. And so Huguenau, the realistic one, can come on stage as political man — he, who seeks to denigrate Pasenow through intrigue, who, characteristic of the *Neue Sachlichkeit,* becomes infatuated with the

printing press to the point of obsession, who commits a murder and forgets the murder, the classic wartime perpetrator, who burdened with guilt, simply fails to perceive that guilt. This type existed even after the First World War, the type that as a politician bore the "Allererbärmlichste in die Welt." The early text does not completely overlap with the novel, but that is not only because Broch's diagnosis became more subtle or precise, or changed at all. It is also a factor of the different genre: a polyphonic novel can accomplish more than a short treatise. What appears two-dimensional in the planimetry of the essay appears three-dimensional in the characters and the full resonance of the narrative work. Further numerous parallels can be furnished. The treatises on the disintegration of values included in the text of the novel refer to the revolution and to Huguenau: "Zur Logik des Revolutionärs gehört es, den revolutionären Elan mit äußerster Konsequenz und Radikalität bis zur Statuierung einer Revolution an sich vorwärtszutreiben, wie es überhaupt zur Logik des politischen Menschen gehört, das politische Ziel zur absoluten Diktatur zu bringen." In these treatises the "metaphysische [. . .] Rücksichtslosigkeit" is condemned in the same breath; what is meant here is that "nur auf die Sache und nur auf die Sache gerichtete Logizität, die nicht nach rechts, nicht nach links schaut — oh, dies alles ist der Denkstil dieser Zeit" (KW1,496).

The revolution takes place in a small town near Trier; bread riots in prison, scenes of war are described. Huguenau himself is a deserter, though unrecognized as such, and he takes action against the deserters; this wretched politician's devices, which render everything human utterly superficial, could not be more blatantly demonstrated. For Pasenow, the Romantic, an evening with dancing where men and women jump about shamelessly, as the text says, turns into Hell: "Eine Zeit, die so rational ist, daß sie unausgesetzt flüchten muß," reads the aphorism (KW1,597).

Although it is not my intention to reduce the novel's polyphony to the dimensions of the brief essay, it does seem appropriate to demonstrate how the experience collected in this text forms the substratum for the depiction of the upheavals of 1918 in a small German town. That Huguenau's power struggle also centers on a minor newspaper might roughly recall the role the *Neue Freie Presse* played in the days of the revolution in Vienna. The Red Guard occupied the building. Many more parallels can be drawn, where in each case "Die Straße" yields one of the models for the later novel. Lützeler and others have shown how many different models underlie Broch's novel, including in the final part the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey,* and these in multiple ways at once. But it is not only Huguenau and Esch who can be seen as Odysseus; Dr. Wendling

can as well, as one who returns home. In my view "Die Straße" forms an additional model underlying the third part of Broch's later trilogy, one that Broch produced himself. Once the commonalities of the two texts are recognized, their differences can perhaps be better illuminated.

V

Broch's brief essay made history, literary history. Franz Blei admired it so much that he quoted from it extensively in his *Erzählung eines Lebens* (1931) and hardly delineated the border between what was his own and what had been adopted. Perhaps what he admired so much was the horror he found there at the power of the political and the violations of the coup, which he could not reconcile in his own ironic depiction of the revolution: "Das gute österreichische Revolutiönchen strich in einem so sanften Winde, daß es ihren Trägern die Mäntel ganz von selber und ohne ihr Zutun und unbemerkt auf die andere Seite drehte." Blei changes the emphasis, making a diminutive of the revolution: "Revolutiönchen." "Die vollzogene Revolution wurde [. . .] als eine Tatsache mit Statisten vor und auf der Tribüne gefeiert."[15] Only as theater can the revolution become a real event for the Viennese. How different from Hermann Broch! His text is still completely marked by the immediacy of the experience, and the same immediacy he carefully salvaged for the later novel. Instead of the grandiose backdrop of Vienna, it is a small German town where the scenes unfold, more lucid and distinct in their exemplariness. Regardless of how one assesses Broch's analysis, as a downplaying of the events or as self-complacent irony, he cannot be accused of evasiveness. What is revealing though, is what remained of the text. Blei seemed particularly impressed by the phrase about the political being "die letzte und böseste Verflachung" of humanity. The phrase occurs in his autobiography as if it were his own. And another author also picked it up, one who largely endeavored to extirpate the political from his texts. Heimito von Doderer loved the sentence and often misquoted it as Blei's. Having thus isolated the phrase, he was able to make his disgust with any kind of politics into a motto. Austria's writers, artists and intellectuals prefer to distance themselves from politics, so in this respect Broch's sentence may also be valid coming from Blei.[16] But caution is advisable with such sentences. It is unacceptable to isolate them, and for the sake of good taste, one should check, before one uses such words, whose mouth they have been in already.

Translated from German by Michael Huffmaster

Notes

[1] This open letter appeared in the Broch letter volume. For other political articles see (KW11).

[2] Robert Musil, "Was arbeiten Sie? Gespräch mit Robert Musil" (30. April 1926), in: R. M., *Gesammelte Werke*. Ed. Adolf Frisé (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1978), 939.

[3] Paul Michael Lützeler, Hermann Broch — *Ethik und Politik. Studien zum Frühwerk und zur Romantrilogie "Die Schlafwandler"* (Munich: Winkler, 1973), 43.

[4] It is worth to point out that the 1959 edition of the text in: Hermann Broch, *Die Unbekannte Größe und frühe Schriften: Mit den Briefen an Willa Muir,* ed. and with an introduction by Ernst Schönwiese (Zurich: Rhein-Verlag, 1961), 257, omits the word "kommunistischer"; in the same edition the phrase "Sie (i.e. die Masse) ist skeptisch und damit jüdisch!" is shortened and runs as "Sie ist skeptisch!" (259). Two revealing corrections for which the editor Schönwiese is evidently responsible, as to be seen in the typewritten copy of the text in the Yale University Library.

[5] Italicized in the original.

[6] Georg Büchner, *Sämtliche Werke und Briefe. Historisch-kritische Ausgabe mit Kommentar*. Ed. Werner R. Lehmann vol.2 (Munich: Hanser, 1972), 425. (Letter to Minna Jaegle, March 1834).

[7] Kurt Krottendorfer, *Versuchsanordnungen. Das Verhältnis von Literatur und Realität in Robert Musils "Drei Frauen"* (Vienna, Cologne, Weimar: Böhlau, 1995), 13–29.

[8] Franz Norbert Mennemeier, "Hugo von Hofmannsthal: Der Unbestechliche," in: *Die deutsche Komödie. Vom Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart*. Ed. Walter Hinck (Düsseldorf: Bagel, 1977), 234.

[9] Thomas Mann, *Der Zauberberg* (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 1960), 9.

[10] Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler, "Wien 1918: Glanzloses Finale," in: *Paradigmen der Moderne. Viennese Heritage*. Ed. Helmut Bachmaier (Amsterdam: Benjamin's, 1990), 141–47.

[11] Karl Kraus, *Worte in Versen* (Munich: Kösel, 1959), 357.

[12] Fred Gehler, "Die Straße," in: *Deutsche Spielfilme von den Anfängen bis 1933*. Ed. Günther Dahlke and Günter Karl (Berlin: Henschel, 1988), 93. Daniela Sannwald, "Bilder der Großstadt. Wien und Berlin im Kino der zwanziger und frühen dreißiger Jahre," in: *Wien-Berlin. Mit einem Dossier zu Stefan Großmann*. Ed. Bernhard Fetz and Hermann Schlösser (Vienna: Zsolnay, 2001), 123–24.

[13] Heimito von Doderer, *Die Erzählungen*. Ed. Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler (Munich: Biederstein, 1972), 13.

[14] Ibid, 30.

[15] *Versuchsstation des Weltuntergangs. Erzählte Geschichte Österreichs 1918–1938*. Ed. Ulrich Weinzierl (Vienna and Munich: Jugend & Volk, 1983), 17f.

[16] Gerald Sommer, "'Die Lerche' — Metaphern eines theoretischen Irrtums oder Warum Mary die Situation nicht klärt," in: *"Schüsse ins Finstere." Zu Heimito von Doderers Kurzprosa*. Ed. Gerald Sommer and Kai Luehrs-Kaiser (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2001), 45.

Visionaries in Exile: Broch's Cooperation with G. A. Borgese and Hannah Arendt

Paul Michael Lützeler

I

In the late 1980s a provocative book appeared that upset many professors of German literature in the United States, especially experts on exile literature. In his book *The Closing of the American Mind,* Allan Bloom discussed what he termed the negative impact of the "German connection" on American culture of the twentieth century.[1] The emigrants who fled Hitler's Germany in the 1930s appeared to Bloom to constitute an unwelcome intellectual invasion. With their psychoanalytical theories and their ideas on the relativity of values, the exiled authors had, according to Bloom, destroyed the traditional educational canon of American colleges and universities — that is, they had cast doubt on the American ideals of common sense, religion, and justice. The cultural-political unease of the last decades, the questioning of the dominant American identity concept by the student movement, by feminist studies, and by the multicultural discourses was traced back to the influence of the European emigrants of the 1930s and 1940s, and especially the German emigrants. Bloom's analysis is as one-sided as it is undialectical. First of all: although the impact of the Hitler refugees should not be underestimated, it is obvious that the more recent emancipation movements in the United States are deeply rooted in the traditions and founding documents of American democracy. And secondly, the refugees from Germany and Austria not only left their mark on the American educational arena, but they themselves in turn were influenced by the experience of the American way of life. Many intellectual contributions of the exiled authors show a kind of hybrid American-European cultural mixture. The discussion of Bloom's book and the opposition to its main theses showed how strongly the ideas of cultural plurality are anchored in the American educational environment. It was these concepts in particular that the emigrants helped to intensify and for which they were

originally expelled from a racist monocultural regime that had declared the representatives of pluralism and relativism to be its arch enemies.

The reflected experience of the exiled authors themselves stands in stark opposition to Allan Bloom's thesis.[2] As Ernst Bloch[3] has shown exile often leads to a modification of the émigré's values, but it also gives the émigré outsider the opportunity to question the conventions and conformities of the host country. While the loss of the former community can be a traumatic experience, the exiled writer or scholar profits from the widening of his or her intellectual horizon through confrontation with other traditions and different ways of thinking.[4] The refugees from Hitler did not confine themselves to the questioning of American values. Nearly all of them supported fundamental American concepts of human rights and democracy in their struggle against National Socialism. The émigrés' affinity to and support of American political values is documented in many of their writings. *The City of Man* of 1940, a product of the cooperation between American intellectuals and exiled authors, is a prime example.[5]

The City of Man had been published by Viking Press in New York, a prominent publisher at the time. The title of the book was a reference to Augustine's utopia *De civitate Dei,* and the authors probably had a secularized, modern utopia in mind when they chose this particular title: "God" is replaced by "Man." At the same time, it is obvious that one understands Augustine's philosophy — with its mix of Greek, Roman, Christian and Jewish thinking — as a base on which to build. Like Augustine, the authors felt they were at the dawn of a new era, an age that would have to follow the present world historic crisis. This is obvious from the text of the dust jacket, which reads:

> The signers of this Declaration call upon everyone within hearing of their voices to throw aside the despair and disillusion that the events of our day have induced, and to accept the desperate crisis itself as a vantage point from which the wrongs of the past can be effectively challenged by a living program for democracy in the future. The men and women whose deepest convictions are expressed in this joint manifesto are spokesmen of many cultures and many human pursuits. They have gravitated together because they know that for the moment the tasks on which they are individually engaged must give way, and that they must contribute the weapons they possess to the common cause of mankind.

The "despair of our day" to which this text refers was Hitler's victory over France in the spring of 1940 and the fear that Europe would fall victim to the totalitarian powers. The jacket text continues:

> Those weapons are formidable, for the authors of "The City of Man" are representative of the highest attainments of the modern mind. It is possible that their Declaration, which thrusts to the roots of the world's sickness and proposes a cure based on universal verities rather than on debatable specific strategies, will be as epoch-making a statement for a new democratic era as other great Declarations have been in their times.

With the words "other great Declarations" they were referring to the founding documents of the United States: the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights. The book (or rather the promotion of the publishing company) promised a lot, certainly more than it could keep. The title page of the book listed seventeen authors.

Thomas Mann was the most prominent of the authors of *The City of Man*. Under "Princeton, November 17, 1939," the author made the following entry in his diary: "Zum Thee Meisel, Borgese, *Marck* und *Broch*. Diskussion über den Plan eines Sammelwerkes zur Vorbereitung eines restaurierten Abendlandes."[6] At first glance one is puzzled. "Restoration of the West"? Does this not sound like a project responding to *The Decline of the West* (2 vols., 1918–22) by the conservative philosopher Oswald Spengler? That would be a misunderstanding. What was discussed here was nothing less than a strategy to help mobilize the United States as Hitler's primary opponent, to support those political circles in the United States that wanted to declare war against Germany. Hitler had started the war three months earlier with his campaign against Poland. The plan was to publish a book that would aim to convince the American public that war with Germany was unavoidable, that the war could be won, and that this would mean a major victory for the democracies. The majority of Americans — and Congress — did not want to go to war at the time, which was understandable, since they had barely overcome the effects of the Great Depression. As late as 1940–41, Roosevelt was able to win his third term as president only by promising to keep the U.S. out of the war.[7] An interesting coincidence: *The City of Man* appeared in November 1940, at the time when Roosevelt had just won the election. The book has two dimensions: one political and one utopian. The political aspect is concerned with convincing the American public to enter the war against Hitler; the utopian element becomes clear when the authors outline a political and social philosophy that could be used in the ideological fight against the racism and imperialism of the National Socialists and fascists as well as against the communist utopia as propagated by Stalinism. So far as bringing the U.S. into the war is concerned: this seemed to be nearly impossible. It took the Japanese

attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941 to change the minds of the American public.

Thomas Mann had fled Nazi Germany in 1933. He first went to Switzerland, then in 1938 he emigrated to the United States.[8] He lived in Princeton until March 1941, a neighbor of Albert Einstein. During the spring of 1939 Giuseppe Antonio Borgese visited Mann in Princeton to secure his support for his own political plans. Borgese is a by now forgotten Italian intellectual. Borgese was an Italian historian and political scientist with a penchant for novel writing and with pronounced literary interests. He had turned his back on Mussolini's Italy as early as 1931 and had caused a stir with his anti-fascist book *Goliath: The March of Fascism,* which came out in 1937.[9] Borgese became acquainted with the Mann family during their American exile in Princeton. He fell in love with Mann's youngest daughter Elisabeth, and he married her November 23, 1939. In 1940 he was offered a chair in Italian Studies at the University of Chicago. Robert Hutchins, the liberal and reform-minded President of this university, made it possible. Since the early 1930s Broch had been in touch with Thomas Mann. In 1936–37, Broch wrote his "Völkerbund-Resolution" (KW11,195–231), an anti-Nazi study in defense of human rights, a resolution that Mann[10] had intended to publish (at least in part) in his exile literary journal *Mass und Wert.*

For both Borgese and Broch, the Munich Agreement of September 1938 had meant a change in their way of thinking. The Munich Agreement was a result of French and British appeasement politics: it signified the capitulation of the West European democracies vis-à-vis Hitler's dictatorship. From that point on, both Borgese and Broch were no longer merely concerned with conducting a journalistic fight against dictatorships; they wanted to rethink the principles of democracy, to propose a new theoretical basis for democratic states, in light of the moral and political weakness of the Western democracies. These three exiled intellectuals did not waste time lamenting their fate as refugees, did not reflect morosely on the yoke of their exilic existence, did not complain about the disadvantages of their diasporic and nomadic life. What was on their minds was a clear political aim: to contribute in their way to the fight against National Socialism. At the end of 1938 and the beginning of 1939, both Borgese in Chicago and Broch in New York gathered small circles of like-minded people who were to help in the realization of their plans. In May 1939, Borgese had circulated an initial memorandum to the future members of the group. The memorandum (which is included in *The City of Man*) was sent out three months before

the outbreak of the Second World War, but its authors foresaw what was coming. The memorandum reads, in part:

> A military victory of Nazism or Fascism probably allied with Japan would certainly include a challenge of some sort, within a relatively short span of time, to the security and independence of the U.S.A. [. . .] Therefore, whatever concerns the European nations concerns ourselves. (99)

The memorandum stresses the point that the endeavor will be a team effort of American and exiled European intellectuals. It says:

> The collaboration of what is best in American culture with what is best in European intellectual immigration might be the source of incalculable benefits for the active intelligence of tomorrow. (101)

The plan was to start "a deep, systematic, and unbiased study of the problems harassing the Europe of today, problems of political and national as well as of social, economic, and even biological nature" (101). The members of this group should, according to the memorandum,

> be free of any allegiance except to truth and of any obedience except to the laws of this country; they should also be as free as possible of any dependence on private or corporate interests and stand as far as possible above and beyond the crystallized or crystallizing interests of classes or groups engaged in mutual strife. [. . .] It is not Utopian to suppose that a deep, systematic, and unbiased study of the problem harassing the Europe of today [. . .] would mean a substantial help to the statesmen who will be called sooner or later to build a new world from ruins. (101–4)

The Borgese group wanted to convince the American public that isolationism would make no sense, that it would only play into Hitler's hands. At a time when the war had not even started, the Borgese group was already making plans for postwar Europe. The group suggested founding a Europe Committee, which should make plans for a new "League of Nations" or even for a democratic "World Government." In other words, they were trying to learn from the mistakes that had been made when the League of Nations was founded after the First World War, and they started thinking about a new institution that would later evolve into the United Nations.

But the group was not merely making plans for the postwar period abroad; it also wanted to contribute to reforming democracy within the United States. It wanted to achieve both: to make plans for what it called a new "world order" and to redefine American democracy. The Ameri-

can idea of the new world order is much older than one might think; it was formulated half a century before the historic changes of 1989.

On March 28, 1940, Borgese's Committee on Europe sent invitations for membership to a series of American and exiled European intellectuals. In the meantime the war had been going on for half a year. The acute world political situation is a major topic in this letter of invitation. The letter reads:

> The forecast that our civilization is bound for a crisis even more severe than was the downfall of ancient civilization may well sound like the overemphasis of frightened imaginations. There hardly seems to be, however, any substantial exaggeration in the statement that all the systematic structures that have been proposed to modern society either have collapsed or show ominous cracks. No one worthy of being called a humanist and partaking in the community of intelligence can feel anything but loathing for the spirit of Nazism and Fascism. (109)

This letter envisions a "third road" (or third way) between capitalism and socialism. It talks about a "vision of a third road which should not take society either to the jungle of ruthless competition or to the prison of crushing regimentation" (109–10). This letter of invitation bore the signatures of Giuseppe Antonio Borgese, Robert Hutchins, Thomas Mann, Lewis Mumford, William Neilson, and Reinhold Niebuhr, that is, of four American intellectuals and two European refugees. Subsequent to this letter of invitation, six meetings were arranged: the first one was introductory, the second dealt with war and peace and the future world order, the third with definitions and redefinitions of democracy, the fourth with education and religion, and the fifth with economic reform. Broch was one of the new members they had recruited, and he was to influence the project considerably. He was particularly involved in the discussions on democracy and economic reform. William Allan Neilson, president of Smith College, was elected chair of the committee, and Giuseppe Antonio Borgese became the secretary.

The important sixth meeting took place two months later. The enlarged Europe Committee met in the Haddon Hall Hotel, Atlantic City, New Jersey, for a three-day conference from May 24 to 26, 1940. In the course of this meeting, the Europe Committee renamed itself the Committee of Fifteen, since it had fifteen members. The change of name also indicates that the Borgese group was no longer concerned solely with the European problem. Hermann Rauschning's book *Gespräche mit Hitler* had appeared at the beginning of 1940[11] and revealed that, in the author's view, Hitler intended not only to subjugate all of Europe, but

that he planned to dominate the globe. On March 3, 1940, Broch wrote to Borgese: "Die 'Gespräche mit Hitler' geben ein recht komplettes und m. E. auch ein recht authentisches Bild von dem politischen Welt-Konzept, das Hitler in seinem Hirn, in seiner Seele, in seinem Herzen hegt und dem er dient: es ist das Konzept einer neuen Welt-Sklavenwirtschaft" (KW13/2,172). The Borgese group wanted to oppose Hitler's concept of global terror with a program for international democracy.

While the group was holding this conference in Atlantic City, the battle for France was being fought, ending soon in Hitler's victory. It was a crushing defeat for European democracy, and continental fascism became the — literally — crushing force in Europe. Mann's diary reflects the depression that reigned among the conference members. Under the heading "Atlantic City, Sonnabend den 25.V.40," he wrote:

> Gestern sehr schwerer Tag, tiefer Gram über die schauerliche Hoffnungslosigkeit der Kriegslage, trostlos dunkles und nasses Wetter, Erschöpfung durch die Teilnahme an den Sitzungen, den ganzen Vormittag und nachmittags von ½ 4."

Thomas Mann's commitment was blended with skepticism, as the rest of his diary entry shows:

> Hatte bei der Vormittagssitzung im Backwell-Room den Vorsitz und hielt, mit ganzem Einsatz, meine Ansprache, die Eindruck machte, nicht so sehr durch das Was, und ausnahmsweise Beifall auslöste. Die Sitzung diffus, nach vielen Seiten gehend, endete erst nach ½ 1.[12]

Mann's speech was probably a shorter version of his lecture "The Problem of Freedom/ Das Problem der Freiheit" of 1939.[13] The most prominent American member of the Borgese group was the architect and city planner Louis Mumford. It is to his autobiography *My Works and Days* that we owe the fullest account of the Atlantic City meeting.[14] Of its leader, Mumford wrote:

> Antonio Borgese, with his swarthy Sicilian skin, his beetling brows, his protrusive underlip, quietly dominated. He has a voice that is usually strong and sonorous, but sometimes caressing: always speaking with eloquence, in the ironic vein of Settembrini in *The Magic Mountain,* but no windbag. (391)

Hermann Broch is the "stoop-shouldered, pipe-smoking intellectual, outwardly an Austrian Sherlock Holmes, a brilliant mind" (391). Hans Kohn, the historian and philosopher of law from Prague, had emigrated to the United States in 1933. He had first taught at the New School for

Social Research in New York, a haven for many exiled scholars, and had joined the faculty at Smith College in 1934; Allan Neilson, President of Smith, had recruited him to the group. Mumford portrays Hans Kohn as:

> another Central European, a heavy-set man with a kindly pasty face, an earnest pessimistic air. He talked volubly, but with great dialectic skill, real insight, well-supported arguments and unshakable moral conviction. (391)

Another emigrant participant was Gaetano Salvemini, an Italian like Borgese. He was a historian of medieval and modern European history and had been a member of the Italian Parliament until Mussolini had come to power. In 1932, he emigrated to the United States and taught history at Harvard from 1933 to 1948. In 1936, he had published the anti-Mussolini book *Under the Ax of Fascism*.[15] Of him, Mumford wrote:

> At the opposite pole was Gaetano Salvemini, with his snub-nosed, Socratic head. He has a squeaky voice, a bubbling humor, an able rationalist mind; ebullient, vehement, sometimes almost grotesque. (391)

Of Thomas Mann one reads in Mumford's autobiography:

> Thomas Mann, grave, genial, aloof, a little shy, still because of his English, was silent most of the time; but his deep feeling in the reading of his paper on democracy impressed everyone: at one point he could hardly keep back his tears. (392)

Just as interesting and telling are the portraits of some of the American participants like Herbert Agar, author of books on the political history of the U.S.; William Yandell Elliott, an economist and political scientist at Harvard University; William Allen Neilson, from Smith; and Reinhold Niebuhr, the theologian from New York. In Mumford's words:

> Herbert Agar, a lean, self-contained man, with a low voice, had none of this European vehemence. He shares this trait with Yandell Elliott from Harvard; but in his quiet reserved way Agar was one of the most forceful personalities there. Then there was President William Allan Neilson of Smith College, now over seventy; still admirably alert and hopeful: not perhaps an original mind, but a highly intelligent one, his judgements salted by a quiet humor. I have still to describe the blue-eyed Reinhold Niebuhr with his bald head, the most Dürer-like of our whole group. He spoke with an excessive inner pressure, too rapidly for the fullest effect, but still impressive. (392)

Of the atmosphere at the talks on the first day of the conference Mumford wrote:

> At the beginning our minds met in a series of personal affirmations and discussions, superior in moral texture to those of any other group I had ever worked with. The tragic decisions we were all facing lifted our spirits to the highest plane: a plane well above our private egoisms, vanities or ambitions. (392)

But the change from this positive mood came soon afterwards. William Benton, then director of a Chicago advertising firm, had been recruited as a possible financier of the project. In the course of the conference he suddenly declared that this group of intellectuals was a non-starter, that — and this in Mann's and Mumford's presence — they were all simply too obscure for their book to be a success. Here one has to mention that *The City of Man* was originally planned as an ongoing project that would publish a series of contributions treating American democracy and world politics. This is mentioned in letters from Broch to Eric Voegelin of September 1940 und February 1941.[16] Due to lack of subsidies, only this one volume appeared. The Borgese group decided to continue the project in spite of the lack of long-range financial backing, due not least to Mumford's speech in favor of carrying on. Borgese, Broch, Agar, Elliott, and Neilson then formed a subcommittee to mount another conference, which took place at the Bartram Inn in Sharon, Connecticut (near Mumford's country house in Amenia, New York) on August 24–25, 1940. Four days after the Sharon conference, Broch wrote (in typical immigrant English) about it to his friend Henry Seidel Canby, then Yale professor of English and American Literature and simultaneously the editor of *The Saturday Review of Literature:*

> I would like to remain in the good mood in which I came away from Sharon. Our days there seemed to be under a lucky star and, quite irrationally, a glimmer of hope awakened in me. Of course it was a political hope, but not only political, it was so to speak hope for mankind, and hope for my personal fate — something that could give my life meaning again, perhaps by helping to build the new world which "must" be born of all this fighting.[17]

In Sharon, Connecticut, the Borgese group drew up the declaration and worked out a proposal. Both the theoretical declaration and the more practical proposal appeared in *The City of Man.* It came out three months later in November 1940. Borgese had undertaken the final editing and Broch assisted him. Broch dealt with economic issues, and his correspondence with Borgese shows what he considered important: first, a

combination of free and planned economic policy (Broch called this the "third road" or "third way" between capitalism and socialism) and second, an "Economic Bill of Rights," securing the right to work, a right that remains utopian to this day. Broch had given Thomas Mann a copy of his contribution, and on October 17, 1940, Mann noted in his diary: "Gelesen gute ökonomische Bemerkungen von Broch."

Altogether seventeen people lent their names to the book. Apart from those already mentioned, the group included Frank Aydelotte, director of the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton and a former president of Swarthmore College; Van Wyck Brooks, the writer and critic; Ada L. Comstock, principal of Radcliffe College at Harvard University; Dorothy Canfield Fisher, the writer; Christian Gauss, Dean at Princeton University; Oscar Jaszi, a political scientist at Oberlin College; and last but not least, Alvin Johnson, director of the New School for Social Research in New York.

II

What pronouncements and demands are made in *The City of Man*? The declaration begins with a description of the catastrophic world situation in 1940: the appeasement policy of France and England had brought Europe to the brink of ruin, and those nations not yet subjugated were putting all their hopes on America. Their hopes must not be disappointed — this is the major anti-isolationist message of the book. America, with its democratic political system, should offer a humane alternative to National Socialism. However, American democracy, like European democracy, was undergoing a profound crisis, and fascism could be opposed only by a revitalized democracy. As the most powerful of those nations with a democratic constitution, the United States should strive to ensure that democracy was held in high international regard and should work for the realization of universal peace as opposed to fascist glorification of militant heroism and war mongering. This peace could be ensured only if it were protected by a universal democratic state — the state of states. The old Europe-centered plans gave way to the idea of a democratic world state with the United States at its center. "The City of Man," we read, "must be much more than a League of Nations or a coalescence of continents. It must be the Nation of Man embodied in the Universal State, the State of States" (392). The time of nation states is over, the book declares. Just as nations arose after the collapse of the Roman Empire, so now they must merge into a new world state in which each would be subservient to the whole. Switzerland was cited

as a model for a future federal multi-nation state. Like Switzerland, the world state should be organized on a decentralized basis; the important principle was that of subsidiarity. Subsidiarity means that communities would accept responsibility for their own land and administer their own affairs. The authors of the declaration state:

> Regional decentralization will effectually distribute power to the smallest local unit, the city and the village, down to the elemental unit which is the family, while world-wide authority will make co-operation possible among them all. These two movements — centripetal and peripheral — are essential one to the other; the first without the second would be tyranny, as the second without the first would be chaos. Together they provide a working basis for peace and freedom: an order that will be both strong and flexible.[. . .] Diversity in unity and unity in diversity will be the symbols of federal peace in universal democracy. (26–27)

The supreme world state government would have a purely supervisory function and would ensure that democratic principles were upheld. Thus, centralism and federalism would be mutually dependent and complementary. The world state would be represented by a universal parliament that would not be a gathering of people appointed by the various nations but would be elected directly by the populace as a whole. World democracy would be founded on free choice, equality, and justice. The ethical basis of a future world democracy is discussed as well.

The theologian Reinhold Niebuhr had a strong impact on the declaration. He tries to demonstrate that American democracy rests on the Judeo-Christian tradition, on the laws and teachings of the Old and New Testaments. He sees a close connection between the Christian religion and the American conviction that men are born equal, as expressed in the Declaration of Independence. Obviously the new dictatorships in Germany and Italy were preaching the opposite. We read in the declaration:

> Fascist-Nazi philosophy, holds as self-evident truths that men are born unequal, that they have no right to life or liberty, and that the only pursuit of happiness for the herds is on the road to slavery under the whip of self-appointed herdsmen. (38)

With the reference to the Declaration of Independence, this Declaration on World Democracy indicates that it sees itself as an offspring of the founding documents of the United States. Both the Catholic and the Protestant Church are blamed by Niebuhr for their lack of opposition to the fascist and Nazi dictators in Europe. The reason is attributed to their century-long close connections to the state governments in Europe. And

this is reason enough for Niebuhr to insist on the American separation of church and state in a future world democracy. The future super-state obviously would be modeled after the United States of America. One reads:

> No Church, however powerful or far-spreading, can be officially acknowledged as a religion of the state, and no Church can be granted primacy or privileges above other churches. Indeed, the desire for such a place of privilege or pre-eminence on the part of any Church would be a measure of its inadequacy to the fundamental principle of democracy. The separation of state and Church, as first provided in the Constitution of the United States, is and remains the base from which arises the supremacy of world-humanism and world-democracy. (46)

Niebuhr went so far as to view *The City of Man* as the "New Testament of Americanism," and this New Testament would be called "World Humanism." Niebuhr is a thinker fixed on unity. "All that survives of mankind," he writes, "must breathe in one breath and fight in one fight, since the whole earth has become one living-space or dying-space for all nations of men."

It is interesting to note that opposition to Stalinism is as strong as it is to National Socialism. *The City of Man* is already informed by the theory of totalitarianism, a theory that came into full bloom ten years later in Hannah Arendt's 1950 study of totalitarianism.[18]

The City of Man is, first of all, a book about the American tasks and goals in the decades of fascism. On page after page one reads about the "mission" and "leadership" of the United States. The authors see America as the Rome of the twentieth century. To quote again from the text:

> Leadership [. . .] implies some sort of imperium. But there is a difference between imperialism and imperium, between those whom their own lust for power chooses for a self-appointed primacy which is the right of might and those who are chosen by the objective circumstances of history for a privilege which is a service, for a right which is a duty. This is, indeed, the substance of a chosen people: power in the frame of service. We have been reminded recently of Bacon's saying: "Rome did not spread upon the world; the world spread upon the Romans." This was the destiny of other nations and cultures, in ancient and in modern ages as well. This [. . .] is the destiny of America [. . .] and all the world must sink unless we take the helm. (64–65)

Accordingly, the authors see a "Pax Americana as a preamble to the Pax Humana." The function of the United States is seen as that of the "Uniting States." "No number is prescribed to the stars on its flag," it says. When one reads formulations like this, one gets the impression that

the authors see the United States as an ever-expanding nation that one day might encompass all other states of the world. This universal state is called the "one Brotherland," or the future "City of Man." Readers these days get an uneasy feeling picturing the U.S. as the biggest state in Big Brotherland. The "City of Man" authors try to explain the difference between being in charge of an empire and being representatives of imperialism, but an empire without imperialism is hardly imaginable. They concede that contemporary America is not yet ready to be an empire without imperialism. Criticism of the situation in America is decidedly pronounced. Among the "blemishes that endanger the fulfillment of its tasks" are included "the degraded education, the corrupted political machines, the efficiency of the dollar hunter." America, (392) the authors write, has to live up to its constitution, and they demand: "The American creed has to become the American deed." Most important, *The City of Man* speaks out against racism:

> Anti-Semitism is the entering wedge of racism, the dusk of hatred which precedes the totalitarian night. The Negro himself, with whom our failure was most inglorious, helps us by reminding us that our slow progress is a mere token of the justice we pledged. [. . .] This country is now more than a structure of ground and water, of mountains and plains. It is and must be the shrine of whatever is human, the ark of life. (69–70)

This must have been one of the spirit lifting phrases Mumford was talking about.

Of further interest is Broch's contribution to the human rights and to the economic aspects of the declaration. Concerning the first, the "Bill of Rights" should be supplemented by a "Bill of Duties," that is to say, in the reformed Constitution, there should be more clearly defined indications of both rights and responsibilities of the individual to the state and of the state to the individual citizen. Of particular interest are the deliberations in the field of economic structures. Again the "third road" or "third way" plays an important part: Capitalism and socialism are seen as

> the Janus faces of democracy, mutually conditioned. From its principle of freedom democracy looks toward capitalism [. . .]; while from its principle of justice democracy looks toward collectivism [. . .]. The two components of democracy — economic freedom and economic justice — must be reconciled in associative and complementary work for an age of creative splendor in which neither the individual's rights emerge into anarchy nor his duties submerge him in slavery. (90, 92)

Today it is easy to criticize *The City of Man* with its utopian plan for a universal democratic state. One can criticize it from a standpoint of *Realpolitik* as well as from a multicultural and postcolonial perspective. The utopia of *The City of Man* must be understood in the context of the time in which it was conceived, a time influenced by the experience of the depression, of New Deal visions, the threat of a new world war, and the possibility of Hitler's victory over Europe. To a certain degree, this plan reminds us of the blueprints for a united Europe that had existed in the pre-Hitler decades for quite some time. There the principle of subsidiarity is also seen as the basis for all administrative actions. Subsidiarity means that a larger administrative unit should make no political decision as long as the smaller administrative unit can make it. In other words, local communities are responsible for their own well being, districts or counties have to take care of themselves, regions have to conduct their own business, as do nations, and ultimately the largest unit will only administer matters that none of the other units were able to carry out. The principle of subsidiarity is a genuinely democratic principle and as such, it is not at all outdated. As a matter of fact, the European Union has officially adopted the principle of subsidiarity as its administrative guideline.[19] And the discussion about the "third road" or "third way," that is, about a compromise between planned socialism and free market capitalism, has never ceased to fascinate political thinkers and politicians. The "third way" has become one of the favorite catchwords in European social democracy and has been discussed in recent years, especially in England and France.[20] The German discussion on the topic is complicated by the fact that the term "third way" had been adopted by those East Germans who, in 1989, when the Berlin wall came down, pleaded for the continuation of the GDR, that is, for a reformed GDR, for a socialist state with a human face. The third way as discussed by the Borgese group in 1940 and as it is currently being rediscussed in Western European countries has a different meaning, namely, a market economy combined with state planning that would avoid the negative consequences of an uncontrolled Manchester capitalism. Furthermore, *The City of Man* deals with major topics of today's globalization discourse, like the declining power of the nation states and the necessity for international political and economic planning. On the other hand, *The City of Man* is deeply rooted in modernist thinking of unity and universalism. The idea of a postmodern pluralism had not yet been invented. More contemporary discourses, such as postmodernism,[21] multiculturalism,[22] and postcolonialism[23] have dealt with visions of universal solutions and imperial ambitions in a most critical manner. The Borgese group drafted

a utopia that was clearly competing with the totalitarian campaigns of Hitler and Stalin for world domination. But in this competition, they lost sight of the fact that there is no patent kind of government suitable for every culture in every part of the world. The Borgese group started out as a Committee on Europe, and it would have been a good idea to keep it that way: to plan a defense for Europe and make plans for the postwar period in Europe. Instead, they tried to create remedies for all of the world's problems, and consequently their plan — its partial farsightedness notwithstanding — did not play a significant role during the years to follow. While it did support the anti-isolationist Roosevelt administration, which knew that war with Hitler was unavoidable, it did not do much to prepare for postwar Europe. The division of the world after the Second World War meant the division of Europe, and this division lasted for about half a century. When things changed dramatically after 1989, the new world order did not signify the beginning of a world democracy but rather the start of the unification of a democratic Europe.

The City of Man is a forgotten book. But when we think of a common project of American and exiled European intellectuals during the late 1930s and early 1940s, it is a major document. It brought a group of leading like-minded people together, and it influenced their thinking in the long run.

To return to my opening statements, *The City of Man* certainly discredits Allan Bloom's thesis about the "German connection" and its disastrous effect on the understanding of America and its mission. If any document was proof of a belief in the founding documents of American democracy, it was *The City of Man*. Both sides were involved in a learning process: The Americans made sure that fundamental issues of human rights and the separation of church and state were accepted, and the Europeans pushed ideas of subsidiarity and the compromise of a third way in the area of political economy. When Mann wrote affidavits for refugees from Germany in the late 1930s, he formulated: "Germany's loss will be America's gain."[24] This phrase makes more sense than Allan Blooms conspiracy idea about the German connection.

After the United States had entered the war against Germany, Italy, and Japan, it became an ally of the Soviet Union, so that the idea of an anti-totalitarian postwar world democracy faded away. One could not oppose the Soviet Union and at the same time be its strongest ally. But Thomas Mann and other exiled authors who had fled to the United States continued to reflect on the fate of Europe, especially in their fictional writings. This group of novelists knew that a better Europe had existed in the past and would exist again in the future. They were sure

that the idea of a better Europe and of a better Germany needed to be upheld. Again it was Mann who was the most prominent representative of this group, and again Broch was one of its members. I am referring to Thomas Mann's *Doktor Faustus,* Heinrich Mann's *Henri Quatre,* Broch's *The Death of Vergil,* Lion Feuchtwanger's *Josephus* trilogy, and Stefan Zweig's novel on Erasmus of Rotterdam.[25] While the utopian declaration *The City of Man* has long been forgotten, these novels continue to be read. Maybe this tells us something about the power of fiction versus the weakness of political pamphlets.

III

More than anything else, it was the "City of Man" project that led to Broch's later essays on politics and human rights. One of the leading intellectuals with whom Broch was in touch during the postwar years was Hannah Arendt. Broch met her and her husband Heinrich Blücher frequently in New York, and they often exchanged ideas in their correspondence.[26] During the years Arendt and Broch were corresponding, they were working on two qualitatively as well as quantitatively impressive books. At the heart of these studies was the confrontation with the political totalitarianism of the Hitler and Stalin eras. Arendt, who was writing in English, finished her book in 1950 so that it could be published in the spring of 1951 under the title *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. Probably Arendt's most important work, it was well received and is considered a standard work to this day. Broch, who was writing his study on mass hysteria (*Massenwahntheorie;* KW12) in German, was unable to complete the work because his many other projects interfered. It was first published posthumously as part of the annotated collected works in 1979, more than three decades after its conception. Although the voluminous manuscript is a fragment, only a few sections remained incomplete. Of course, there was no reaction to the work from Broch's contemporaries, and even now this study remains the least known of Broch's books. Although Broch's as well as Arendt's studies deal with the confrontation of political totalitarianism (National Socialism and Stalinism), both books were very differently conceived. Arendt dealt with the origins of the contemporary totalitarian state by describing, in her capacity as a socio-historian, the growth and history of racism, anti-Semitism, and imperialism in Europe. She then analyzed the decline of the class society as the prerequisite for totalitarianism and discussed the totalitarian political movements that destroyed democratic party systems,

and finally she examined the state machinery, the secret police, and the concentration camp as the three columns of totalitarian rule.

Broch, on the other hand, was not concerned with the socio-historical origin of totalitarianism but rather with the analysis of mass society which, according to Broch, had found its appropriate political organizational form in totalitarianism. He had three goals: first, to determine the anthropological and psychological prerequisites for mass hysteria; second, to provide a phenomenological description of the dialectics of the masses and their leadership; and third, to show the way in which masses, having succumbed to totalitarianism, might be reclaimed for democracy, especially by way of human rights. It is significant that the third part of the study bore the title "Demokratie versus Totalitärstaat" (KW12,510ff.).

During their work on the two studies, Broch and Arendt sent each other chapters that they knew would be of interest to them. In their discussion they concentrated on the topic of human rights. In 1945–46, Broch had written a lengthy essay entitled "Bemerkungen zur Utopie einer 'International Bill of Rights and of Responsibilities'" (KW11,243–76). At the time, the UN Commission for Human Rights was working under the chairmanship of Eleanor Roosevelt on the "International Bill of Human Rights." Broch had intended his essay for discussion by this UN commission. All of Broch's friends had received copies. In this essay he proposed a law to protect human dignity, at the same time warning that human rights should not become a mere proclamation. States that ignored human rights would be punished; if necessary, a state's sovereignty would have to be revoked by the UN. Broch saw this as the only way in which concentration camps could be erased permanently as the characteristic features of totalitarian rule.

Arendt, who was acquainted with Broch's essay, asked him in September of 1946 to read her own manuscript on human rights. This essay appeared three years later in English in *The Modern Review* and in German in *Die Wandlung*.[27] A much revised version was included in her book on totalitarianism. When Arendt wrote to Broch, she stressed that she had written the study "halb um Ihres Artikels wegen" (ABB, 14). Like Broch, Arendt was convinced that human freedom and dignity could be protected only through civil rights in the individual states. She showed, by citing the example of stateless persons, that there was no agency (not even within the UN) that could grant human rights protection to such individuals. She thought little of the "Proclamation of International Human Rights." Convinced that the primary and irreplaceable importance of states' civil rights lay within the sovereign national

political community, she wrote: "Einzig der *Verlust der politischen Gemeinschaft* ist es, der den Menschen aus der Menschheit herausschleudern kann."[28] Broch's answer to Arendt's essay was positive. He called her analysis a "präzise und geradlinige [. . .] Hochleistung," and added: "Für mich ist Ihre Arbeit besonders wichtig, weil sie mir eine Bestätigung meiner An- und Absichten ist" (ABB, 18).

A short time later Broch sent Arendt the manuscript entitled "Menschenrecht und Irdisch-Absolutes" which was eventually included in his *Massenwahntheorie* (KW12,456–510). Here Broch was searching for a new basis for human rights, since the medieval divine right and the modern natural right had long since lost plausibility. He felt that after man had been degraded, deprived of his human rights, and eventually destroyed in the concentration camps of the totalitarian states, the "statement of the unconditional condemnation of human enslavement" had to be considered an "earthly absolute." In addition, Broch saw the death penalty as the zero point, as the absolute negative pole of human interaction. Insistence on the acknowledgement of human rights should help prevent future enslavement. Arendt agreed with Broch. "Das ist ein großartiger Entwurf," she wrote, "im wesentlichen wegen der rechtsphilosophischen Entdeckungen (Menschenrecht und irdisch Absolutes)." However, she did not agree with Broch's view of the death penalty as the negative pole of law. She stated:

> Aber als Sie selbstverständlich annahmen, daß die Todesstrafe empirisch die äußerste Strafe ist, fiel mir ein, daß das Teuflische des modernen Terrors ja unter anderem darin besteht, daß er dies Äußerste übertrumpft hat, wohl wissend, daß Menschen vor Schmerzen mehr Angst haben können als vor dem Tode. Sie sagen: Wenn es keinen Tod gäbe, gäbe es keine Furcht auf Erden. Ich weiß, aber ich habe den ketzerischen Gedanken, daß wenn es keinen Tod gäbe, die Furcht auf Erden unerträglich wäre. Es gäbe [keine] Relativierungsmöglichkeit. Wir wären dann, ohne doch die Herren der Dinge zu sein, sozusagen mit dem Ding an sich konfrontiert." (ABB, 94–95)

Arendt did not vacillate from this viewpoint. Broch, however, insisted that the death penalty was the greatest extreme that could be inflicted. He answered: "Es läßt sich nur schwer feststellen, was wirklich eine 'Maximalstrafe' ist: doch welche Torturen man immer sich ausdenkt, sie enden mit dem Tod, und wenn der Körper sich gegen sie aufbäumt, so bäumt er sich gegen den Tod auf" (ABB, 98).

In 1949 Broch summarized the theses of his *Massenwahntheorie* in an essay that appeared a year later in the *Neue Rundschau*.[29] He sent the manuscript to Arendt. In the accompanying letter he once again solicited

her opinion concerning an attempt to reaffirm human rights. He asked: "Halten Sie die kopernikanische Wende zur Verankerung der Menschenrechte im Irdischen (Sklaverei, Konzentrationslager etc.) für vertretbar und berechtigt?" (ABB, 114). Arendt responded promptly: "Das Irdisch-Absolute ist eine wesentliche Entdeckung, weil es nämlich unumgänglich richtig und notwendig ist unter der Voraussetzung, die von der gesamten Tradition akzeptiert wird, daß die Menschenrechte 'angeboren' und gleichsam ein Bestandteil der Menschen sind. Ich persönlich glaube daran nicht mehr" (ABB, 118). As one can learn from her book on totalitarianism, Arendt rejected the idea that human rights are derived immediately from man's nature. The fact that human dignity could be lost only if man were removed from any political society strengthened her opinion that laws for the protection of human dignity could only be enforced in historically concrete, sovereign, political communities, that is, in nations. However, universal human rights, according to Arendt, lacked this concrete basis. In other words, human rights could not be considered "innate" but were the historically and traditionally accumulated inheritance of individual national states. For Broch, Arendt's reservation was too positivistically related to the present; it lacked the utopian dimension that was aimed at a change in international politics. From a positivistic point of view, he conceded, it is true that human rights are non-existent (ABB, 121). This concession, however, did nothing to change his conviction that everything possible should be done to bring the international embodiment of human rights in the political forum.

The main problem for Broch was the untouched sovereignty of those individual states that continued to ignore human rights. He dealt with this particular problem in his essay for the *Neue Rundschau*. As he had done before, he demanded a United Nations international court of law to deal with human rights violations everywhere on the globe. The ideas that Broch developed here are comparable to those later realized by Amnesty International. In Broch's and Arendt's human rights essays, the opinions of the skeptical, pragmatic analyst of the status-quo stood opposed to those of a utopian visionary of the future.

While working on the concept of a new foundation for human rights Broch had also written a study in 1946 entitled "Philosophische Aufgaben einer Internationalen Akademie" (KW10/1,67–112). Arendt considered this an important contribution and recommended its publication in the journal *politics*. However, the project became mired in discussions about revisions and translations, and to this day the essay has not appeared in English. Aware of Broch's interest in the area of university reform, Arendt sent him Karl Jaspers's speech "Erneuerung der Univer-

sität."[30] Broch thanked her and wrote: "Jaspers ist wirklich wie einer, der nach langer Krankheit die ersten Gehversuche macht: die Beine wackeln noch, aber es wird bald wieder funktionieren." This was a very polite response. While the essay had told him nothing essentially new, he was happy to have it for his own university sketch (ABB, 19). When one compares Jaspers's notes with those of Broch, the qualitative difference is immediately noticeable. While both Jaspers and Broch drew their conclusions from the destruction of scholarship during the reign of National Socialism, the alternatives that they offered differed greatly. Jaspers was primarily concerned with the restoration of things as they had been before 1933. Broch, however, was interested in the perspectives of a genuinely future-oriented university. Here, methodological questions of interdisciplinary subjects and the unification of science would be in the foreground. Areas would be added to the traditional university canon that would be worthy of universities in democratic societies: a theory of the humanities along the lines of human rights, and courses on international democracy as well as peace research. As is obvious from his correspondence with Arendt, Broch's ideas about human rights as well as about university reform have lost little of their relevance.

Notes

[1] Allan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind: How Higher Education has Failed Democracy and Impoverished the Souls of Today's Students* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987).

[2] Paul Michael Lützeler, "Exilforschung: Interdiszplinäre und interkulturelle Aspekte," in: P. M. L., *Klio oder Kalliope? Literatur und Geschichte* (Berlin: Erich Schmidt, 1997), 77–81.

[3] Ernst Bloch, "Zerstörte Sprache — zerstörte Kultur," in: *Verbannung: Aufzeichnungen deutscher Schriftsteller im Exil,* ed. Egon Schwarz und Matthias Wegner (Hamburg: Wegner, 1964), 188ff.

[4] Sidra DeKoven Exrahi, *Booking Passage. Exile and Homecoming in the Modern Jewish Imagination* (Berkeley: U of California P, 2000), 10–11., and Edward W. Said, *Reflections on Exile and Other Literary and Cultural Essays* (London: Granta, 2001).

[5] *The City of Man. A Declaration on World Democracy,* Issued by Herbert Agar, Frank Aydelotte, G. A. Borgese, Hermann Broch, Van Wyck Brooks, Ada L. Comstock, William Yandell Elliott, Dorothy Canfield Fisher, Christian Gauss, Oscar Jaszi, Alvin Johnson, Hans Kohn, Thomas Mann, Lewis Mumford, William Allan Neilson, Reinhold Niebuhr, Gaetano Salvemini (New York: Viking Press, 1940).

[6] Thomas Mann, *Tagebücher 1937–1939,* ed. Peter de Mendelssohn (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 1980), 502.

[7] Frank Freidel, *Franklin D. Roosevelt. A Rendezvous with Destiny* (Boston, New York, London: Little, Brown and Company, 1990), 341ff.

[8] Hermann Kurzke, *Thomas Mann. Das Leben als Kunstwerk* (Munich: Beck, 1999).

[9] Giuseppe Antonio Borgese, *Goliath: The March of Fascism* (New York: Viking Press, 1937).

[10] Paul Michael Lützeler, *Hermann Broch. Eine Biographie* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1985), 209ff.

[11] Hermann Rauschning, *Gespräche mit Hitler* (New York: Europa Verlag, 1940).

[12] Thomas Mann, *Tagebücher 1940–1943,* ed. Peter de Mendelssohn (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 1982), 81f.

[13] Thomas Mann, "Das Problem der Freiheit," in: Th. M. *Reden und Aufsätze 1* (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 1990), *Gesammelte Werke* 9, 952–72.

[14] Lewis Mumford, *My Works and Days. A Personal Chronicle* (New York and London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979), 391–92.

[15] Gaetano Salvemini, *Under the Axe of Fascism* (New York: Viking Press, 1936).

[16] This unpublished correspondence can be found in the Hoover Institution in Stanford, California.

[17] Unpublished, Yale University Library (YUL); Broch-Archives in the Beinecke Rare Book Library, New Haven, Connecticut.

[18] Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1951).

[19] George A. Bermann, "Subsidiarity and the European Community," in: *Europe after Maastricht. American and European Perspectives,* ed. Paul Michael Lützeler (Providence and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1994), 139–57).

[20] Otto Newman and Richard de Zoysa, *The Promise of the Third Way: Globalization and Social Justice* (New York: Palgrave, 2001).

[21] *Räume der literarischen Postmoderne: Gender, Performativität, Globalisierung,* ed. Paul Michael Lützeler (Tübingen: Stauffenburg, 2000).

[22] *Schreiben zwischen den Kulturen,* ed. Paul Michael Lützeler (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 1996).

[23] *Schriftsteller und "Dritte Welt." Studien zum postkolonialen Blick,* ed. Paul Michael Lützeler (Tübingen: Stauffenburg, 1998).

[24] See for example Thomas Mann's letter to John C. Wiley, the U.S. Consul General in Vienna of May 15, 1938 in which he writes about Broch: "Austria's loss will be America's gain" (KW13/1,505).

[25] Paul Michael Lützeler, "Neuer Humanismus: Das Europa-Thema in Exilromanen von Thomas und Heinrich Mann, Lion Feuchtwanger und Stefan Zweig," in: P. M. L., *Europäische Identität und Multikultur. Fallstudien zur deutschsprachigen Literatur* (Tübingen: Stauffenburg, 1997), 107–25.

[26] Hannah Arendt — Hermann Broch, *Briefwechsel 1946 bis 1951,* ed. Paul Michael Lützeler (Frankfurt am Main: Jüdischer Verlag im Suhrkamp Verlag, 1996). From now on abbreviated as (ABB).

[27] Hannah Arendt, "Es gibt nur ein einziges Menschenrecht," *Die Wandlung* 4 (1949), 754–70.

[28] Hannah Arendt, "Es gibt nur ein einziges Menschenrecht," *Die Wandlung* 4 (1949), 761.

[29] Hermann Broch, "Trotzdem: Humane Politik. Verwirklichung einer Utopie" (KW11,364–96).

[30] Karl Jaspers, "Erneuerung der Universität," in: *Erneuerung der Universität. Reden und Schriften 1945/46* (Heidelberg: Lambert Schneider, 1986), 93–105.

Fear in Culture: Broch's *Massenwahntheorie*

Wolfgang Müller-Funk

I

THERE ARE AT LEAST THREE important works on the concept of "the masses" that grew out of the context of Austrian society: Sigmund Freuds *Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse* (1921), Hermann Brochs unfinished *Massenwahntheorie* (1939–1948),[1] and, as a postscript, Elias Canettis *Masse und Macht* (1960). To complete the impression that Austrian intellectual culture was obsessed by the topic of the masses, I should like to add three other literary masterpieces: Ernst Weiss's novel *Der Augenzeuge* (1939), a psychoanalytic literary case study on Hitler, in which Weiß has integrated descriptions of masses seduced by the "Führer." The second work is Heimito von Doderer's *Die Dämonen*, a novel the author started in the 1930s and finished in 1956. The architectural center of this ambitious *Zeitroman* is the burning of the Viennese Palace of Justice on July 15, 1927 as a result of a mass demonstration of socialist workers who were protesting against a sentence of the law-court. Doderer, a former national socialist who became an anti-totalitarian conservative, interprets the protest of the socialist workers in a negative sense as an act of an unconscious and class-oriented crowd that has no responsibility for (civil) society as a whole:

> Eine von der sozialdemokratischen Führung am folgenden Tage, dem 15. Juli 1927, keineswegs vorgesehene Demonstration brachte die Arbeiter auf die Beine und in die Innenstadt. Sie marschierten nicht, weil die Mörder eines Kindes und eines Kriegsinvaliden frei gingen. Sondern weil jenes Kind ein Arbeiterkind gewesen war und der Invalide ein Arbeiter. Die "Massen" verlangten die Klassenjustiz, gegen welche einstmals ihre Führer so oft vermeint hatten, auftreten zu müssen. Das Volk schäumte gegen das Urteil des Volksgerichtshofes, gegen sein eigenes Urteil. Damit war der Freiheit das Genick gebrochen: sie hielt sich auch in Österreich nur mehr durch kurze Zeit und künstlich aufrecht. Die sogenannten "Massen" setzten sich immer gerne kompakt auf die in's

> Blaue ragenden Äste der Freiheit. Aber sie müssen diese ansägen, sie können's nicht anders; und dann bricht die ganze Krone zusammen. Wer den "Massen" angehört, hat die Freiheit schon verloren. Da mag er sich setzen, wohin er will. [. . .] Am selben Mittage noch brannte der Justizpalast lichterloh. Im Kampfe mit der Polizei, welche vor allem der Feuerwehr den Weg bahnen wollte, gab es eine schreckliche Unzahl Toter.[2]

And last but not least, Musil's epoch-making novel *Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften* can be read as a study of the masses. It describes, for example, the national revolts in the bilingual industrial area of Brno/Brünn. Moreover, it suggests that the solution for the "Parallel Action" will be — in analogy of Broch's later concept of "Massenwahn"[3] — some sort of mass hysteria (or mass mania). So the private fate of schizophrenic Clarisse and murderer Moosbrugger anticipates the public fate of the collapsing monarchy:

> Das Schattende des Todes wird plötzlich sichtbar. Des persönlichen Todes, ohne daß man etwas ausgerichtet hat u unerachtet dessen das Leben weiter holpert u seine Vergnügungen weiter entfaltet. In der Mobstimmung glauben übrigens alle Leute, dauernd auf Vergnügungen zu verzichten [. . .]. Häuser-Hauchartige Masse, Niederschlag an sich darbietenden Flächen. Außerhalb der Bindungen deformiert jeder Impuls des Menschen. Der Mensch, der erst durch den Ausdruck wird, formt sich in den Formen der Gesellschaft. Er wird vergewaltigt u erhält dadurch Oberfläche [. . .]. Er wird geformt durch die Rückwirkungen dessen, was er geschaffen hat. Zieht man sie ab, bleibt etwas Unbestimmtes, Ungestaltes. Die Mauern der Straße strahlen Ideologien aus [. . .]. U [. . .] fühlt, wie der ganze Mensch in Unsicherheit geschleudert ist. Nach Ja u Nein verlangt.[4]

Before I try to answer the question as to why Austrian intellectual culture became such a fruitful field for the analysis of modern masses, I have to point out that these Austrian intellectuals and writers were not the creators and inventors of the discourse about the masses. When Freud wrote his famous book, he already had access to other, seminal works such as Gustave Le Bon's *Psychologie der Massen* (translated into German 1912), Ludwig Kraškovič's *Die Psychologie der Kollektivitäten* (1915), Wilfred Trotter's *Instincts of the Herd in Peace and War* (1916), William McDougalls's *The Group Mind* (1920). Whereas Le Bon's analysis is based on the experience of the appearance of political masses in the prewar period (1871–1914), all the other books (including Freud's study) refer to the importance of the masses before, during and after the war including the ideological mobilization immediately before the war and

the revolutions and civil wars after it. It is symptomatic that Broch's first reflections about the phenomenon of the "Masse" date from the 1918 open letter to Franz Blei (KW13/1,30–34).

The epiphany of war with its *levé en masse* and its collective enthusiasm has completely changed the discourse on the masses.[5] From the nationalist theoretician Georges Sorel to the revolutionary Marxist Rosa Luxemburg, you may find some sort of heroic idea of the (proletarian) masses, who become the subject of history by changing the world in a militant but peaceful way. Here the appearance of the masses is the result of a highly developed class-consciousness, whereas in the later psychological and biological discourse masses are shows to be gullible, credulous, easily influenced, as Freud pointed out in his study.[6] So the idea of a spontaneously growing consciousness *en masse* and dreadful mass hysteria mark the two possible extreme positions in the discourse about the masses, which were so significant for the first half of the century: self-emancipation on the one hand, self-imprisonment on the other.

It is evident that to some extent the First World War marks an important turning point in the history of modern mass phenomena because it reveals the connection between violence and masses in a modern war of mass extermination. The war started with the masses generally enthusiastic in most European countries. The masses saw the coming war as an instrument of collective salvation. It was also this war that destroyed the old liberal, half-democratic nobility system, substituting for it a new type of mass democracy or populist authoritarian movements (as in Italy or Poland). Since the First World War, modern masses have irrevocably become a constant factor in modern politics, culture and economics. The old paternalistic system (in Austria, but also in Germany or in England), "die Welt von Gestern" (to quote the title of Stefan Zweig's famous book)[7] was quite successful in canalizing and halting the changes in society demanded by the socialist or nationalist movements, but after the World War the traditional techniques of power came to an end. New political movements arose: fascist, authoritarian and radical left movements.

The turning point in post-war Austria was in this respect especially dramatic. Suddenly the people in the heartland of the old monarchy had lost their cultural and political *Heimat* and identity,[8] a state that during the whole of the nineteenth century developed certain techniques of rule to balance its opposites, a system which was extremely fearful of modern mass movements. As Musil demonstrates in his novel *Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften* the world war had destroyed the world of the ruling classes and their ability to control the masses in a traditional way:

> "Das ist die Psychologie der Masse, Erlaucht!" mischte sich der gelehrte General wieder ein. "Soweit es die Masse angeht, versteh ich das sehr gut. Die Masse wird nur von Trieben bewegt und dann natürlich von denen, die den meisten Individuen gemeinsam sind: das ist logisch, sie benützen logische Gedanken gerade nur zum Aufputzen! Wovon sie sich wirklich leiten lassen, das ist einzig und allein die Suggestion! Wenn Sie mir die Zeitungen, den Rundfunk, die Lichtspielindustrie und vielleicht noch ein paar andere Kulturmittel überantworten, so verpflichte ich mich, in ein paar Jahren — wie mein Freund Ulrich gesagt hat — aus den Menschen Menschenfresser zu machen! Gerade darum braucht die Menschheit ja auch eine starke Führung!"[9]

So this *"Störerfahrung,"* this irritating experience (Sloterdijk), brought the need for symbolic treatment. I wish to examine the attempts of Austrian intellectuals and writers to describe and analyze modern mass phenomena in the face of this cultural and political background. Authors like Broch, Musil, but also Freud and the young Canetti tried to understand what happened after the decline of the ancien régime and the rise of the modern masses as an unavoidable factor in politics, culture, and society. The process they described has not yet come to an end however. The burning of the Viennese Palace of Justice was probably not an event in world politics. The same might be true of the events of 1934 and the creation of a specific Austrian right wing mass movement, which was a farce compared with the Italian Fascism to which it was linked, a parody in the sense of Karl Marx.[10] But with Hitler's triumph on the Viennese Heldenplatz in 1938 — an impressive and terrible revelation of the masses — Austria returned to the stage of world politics at least on this occasion. But what is more important in regard to those events — 1927, 1934, 1938 — is that they have a symptomatic and general meaning beyond their historical importance: they are a *Lehrstück,* a lesson in political and cultural theory. This is the way authors like Broch, Doderer and Canetti have read these events. But whereas Doderer, Weiss, and Musil deal with this historical context, Canetti and Broch try to avoid the impression that these specifically Austrian events have played any role in their theories of the masses. But we know from Canetti's autobiography that there were two events which deeply impressed the young intellectual: the masses in the football stadium of Hütteldorf, the home of Austria's most famous football team Rapid Vienna and the fire in the Palace of Justice in 1927. In contrast to Doderer, Canetti describes the "Masse" as a neutral phenomenon. He points out the spontaneity of the "open" masses which at the very beginning has no need for a leader as Freud has argued in his concept of "Übertragung":

> Ein für allemal hatte ich hier erlebt, was ich später eine *offene* Masse nannte, ihre Bildung durch das Zusammenfließen von Menschen aus allen Teilen der Stadt, in langen unbeirrbaren, unablenkbaren Zügen, deren Richtung bestimmt war durch die Position des Gebäudes, das den Namen der Justiz trug, aber durch den Fehlspruch das Unrecht verkörperte. Ich habe erlebt, daß die Masse zerfallen muß und wie sie diesen Zerfall fürchtet; daß sie sich selbst im Feuer sieht, das sie entzündet, und um ihren Zerfall herumkommt, solange dieses Feuer besteht. [. . .] Ich erkannte, daß die Masse keinen *Führer* braucht, um sich zu bilden, den bisherigen Theorien über sie zum Trotz. Einen Tag lang hatte ich hier eine Masse vor Augen, die sich *ohne Führer* gebildet hatte.[11]

In his different versions of a theory of mass hysteria, Broch refers to the historical background only in his proposal for founding a Research Institute for Mass Hysteria but very generally arguing that "die Gefährdung des Menschen durch massenmäßig orientierte Geistesverwirrung [. . .] ein offenes Geheimnis und eben hiedurch auch ein offenes Problem" sei. (KW12,11) Like Canetti, he tries to avoid taking the material for his investigation primarily from the immediate political and historical events. Obviously Broch's intention, like Canetti's and Freud's, is to establish a theory which has a more general and broader universal validity, a theory which is not a mere case study about Hitler's mass movement or, in the case of Freud, about the First World War and its cultural and political consequences. A theory which is able to explain the disastrous inclination of human beings to form themselves into masses which eliminate any response to moral behavior and make people able to treat outsiders in extraordinarily cruel ways. One also could say, that the phenomenon of modern violent masses is one of the most significantly irritating experiences for traditional humanism and classical enlightenment, because when they are organized in masses, human beings are able to deny humanistic behavior and the capacity for responsibility.

What makes Broch's unfinished project on mass hysteria so attractive and interesting is the fact that this irritation, "Sorge" (in a Heideggerian sense), this worry is inscribed and written up in his hesitant and tentative attempts to clear the open problem of the connection between masses, mania and violence. Unlike Canetti and Freud (I refer here to his argumentation in 1921, his *Unbehagen in der Kultur* presents a different position), Broch addresses the question of political alternatives and answers. The open, sometimes incoherent structure of his argumentation and worry about the political future of western society (in which he coincides with Hannah Arendt[12]) contrasts with Freud and Canetti.

Whereas Freud, as in his letter to Einstein, prefers some sort of calmness and composure,[13] Canetti who understood himself as an Anti-Freud[14] seems to see violence, mass and power as a disastrous fate for humanity. Beside the enlightening and cathartic shock of the book itself, there is no way to leave this world of cruelty, which is based on anthropological constants.[15]

II

In Broch's case one can show that his concept of mass hysteria is an original theory that goes far beyond Freud's concept as it is the case in Ernst Weiss. Its interesting literary case study *Der Augenzeuge* (which refers to the Hitler of the Munich period) proves at the end as a misogynistic simplification of Freud's concept, in which the transfer between the leader and the crowd is interpreted as a sexual act between man and woman.[16] What is interesting in regard to Canetti are not the similarities (which are rare) but the differences with Broch. Whereas Canetti describes the masses almost as if they were physical entities, where the "superstructure" does not play any role, Broch's intention is not to write a theory of the masses but a theory of their collective mental and emotional state. For Freud, the collective consciousness of the masses is a pure function of their libido. Although Canetti analyses in one chapter some mass symbols of modern nations (it is not the best part of his book), he devotes his attention to the real movement and development of the masses in their physical state.[17] Broch, however, is the analyst of the "superstructure" of the historical and the modern masses.

Before discussing these concepts, we should look briefly at those of his mighty intellectual rivals. Then I shall work out three of his attempts to define the topic of his analysis. I analyze them separately because they have three different starting points and methodological approaches. So I can show the hesitant, cautious and provisional way[18] in which Broch approaches a subject which is real and non-real at once and which is extremely vague and fluid:

> Nur Konkretes kann beobachtet werden, also konkrete Dinge in ihren konkreten Verhaltungsweisen. Das menschliche Einzelindividuum ist ein derartig konkretes Beobachtungs- und Untersuchungsobjekt. Eine Menschenmasse hingegen hat nicht die gleiche Konkretheitsdignität. (KW12,13)

The problem of the topic has to do with the fact that "the mass" cannot be easily classified. In regard to the genesis of the mass, you have to analyze the psychological motives behind it. On the other hand, masses

are social entities and in this way typical topics of the social sciences, which do not all possess the "dignity of concreteness" (KW12,12). And masses are also embedded in certain real and symbolic contexts (narratives, symbols, media) in terms of a cultural discourse.

When Freud analyses the leader as the constructive element, as the composer of the masses, who has a magic rapport of libido with the people he speaks (*Übertragung* and *Gegenübertragung*) he is not really interested in the phenomenology of the masses as such, but analyses the leader, the composer, and director of the mass, and its audience as an effect of human beings' desire.[19] In any case, Freud's approach is universal and anthropological; there is no acknowledgement that cultures and historical epochs may differ in regard to the masses, that specific symbolic systems produce various forms of real groups. And Freud also does not discuss and analyze the ideograms, narratives and symbols, the banners and slogans, under which people will unify as a mass.

Canetti's concept of the masses is also universal and anthropological, and for that reason he uses ethnographic materials from non-European cultures as material from Islam, Christianity and Judaism. Canetti denies the importance of the leader, seeing in the leader only an effect but not the offspring of the masses. Neither do symbolic forms play a significant role for the genesis of the masses, nor is Canetti interested in a psychoanalytical theory, which explains the mass as an effect of human libido. With regard to the individual, "the mass" offers the only possibility for overcoming its/his/her fear of contact with someone else, with a stranger.[20] This reservation about other people has two sides, the fear of touching someone else and the fear of being touched by someone else. The mass is the only way human beings can overcome this fear. But Canetti does not give an interpretation as to why there is a longing to overcome such fear. In his eyes this has to do with existential sensitivities.

In spite of the contrasts between Freud and Canetti, the programmatic anti-Freudian, the concepts have structural similarities, both arguing with anthropological universals, which contain biological elements (*libido,* fear of touch). There is no clear divergence between biological and cultural anthropology. Thus, Canetti describes the mass as a quasi-physical entity, like a mass in a physical sense, as composed matter. He defines the social matter of the mass by naming four necessary moments: growth, direction, density and equalities of the components. Two of the phenomena are obviously linked with physics (density and direction), whereas growth might be associated with biological processes. Only equality has, beyond the physical connotation, a reference to the social and political world and makes clear that masses are probably important

under cultural, political and social conditions where equality is postulated programmatically as it is the case in Communism and nationalism.

Broch's concept of *Massenwahn* differs as the title suggests, and an enthusiastic reader of Canetti's very carefully composed book could easily be disappointed by the convolution of drafts, essays and chapters in Broch's text.[21] It is not interested in the physics of the masses and also avoids a mere psychoanalytic approach, although Broch, who underwent psychoanalysis, was much more attuned to Freud's theory than Canetti, who saw in him a dogmatic and authoritarian thinker.[22] The traces of Freud in Broch's studies on the masses are easy to find: the use of terms like neurosis, psychosis and hysteria (KW12,282) are part of a psychological discourse. In his concept of culture the symbolic sublimation mechanism and also the highly problematic use of words like "ill" and "healthy" in the context of mental and emotional conditions can be seen as typical psychological issues. Broch uses psychological and psychoanalytical terminology in contrast to Freud who tried to describe the mass as a neutral entity. As a special form to satisfy the desire of the libido, Broch pointed out that the mentality which triggers the genesis of the masses is some sort of illness, a deviation from normal healthy behavior (KW12,13). In his first working hypothesis ("Vorschlag zur Gründung eines Forschungsinstituts für politische Psychologie"), in which he (following Freud's *Unbehagen in der Kultur* but not his *Massenpsychologie*) defines culture as a rational control and regulation of irrational metaphysical needs and instinctive urges, Broch differentiates typically between two ways of dealing with them. The first possibility for a single human being but also for a whole culture (and its work on irrationality), Broch calls "Irrationalbereicherung" (irrationality enrichment). Here the single person or a whole culture is able to produce some sort of an "irrationality-grant," which is necessary not only for the satisfaction of their needs and urges, but also for their cultural transformation into communal spirits and sense of communities. Broch refers to the ethically founded lifestyle of a community with its cultural bonds and its artistic and aesthetic shaping of existence. The other contrastive way, Broch describes, is that of "Rationalverarmung" (rationality impoverishment"). The individual, the group or a whole culture becomes incapable. Here, rational behavior will be replaced by collective instincts. The rationalization is a result of these: because a lot of people share these irrational issues, they receive some sort of legitimacy. The non-ethical revival of uncontrolled instincts seems to be ethical, because it happens *en masse* (KW12,12–14).

Interestingly enough, Broch points out that the inability to deal with irrationality in a symbolic way may be the result of fear, but not a fear of touch as in Canetti, but a fear of insanity and madness, the unrealized fear of the dark side of reason.[23] Rationality includes for Broch, as for Freud, the ability of the individual to confront himself with the uncanny Other. Broch splits the Cartesian *cogito* into its two elements. Whereas the *cogito* is related to truth, and to rational knowledge, the *sum* is referred to the irrational factor of life and the value. The human being has no choice but to assimilate the outside world into the ego by transforming it into a value (the German work "Einverleibung" is associated with a process of integration of a material into the body). Value in Broch means something similar to Cassirer's symbolic form.[24] So culture on the symbolic level is a form of participation, to make the world familiar, or in other words an ego enlargement. So the fear in Broch's study is not a fear of touch but a fear of a *horror vacui* with which the ego is confronted:

> [. . .] überall dort, wo das Ich in solchem Bestreben gehindert wird, überall, wo es an die Grenzen der "Fremd-Welt" stößt und sie nicht zu überschreiten vermag, überall dort entsteht des Wertes Gegen-Zustand, dort entsteht "Angst": das Ich wird sich dann plötzlich seiner Verlassenheit und seiner a priori gegebenen Einsamkeit bewußt, es weiß um die metaphysische Einsamkeit seines Sterbens (KW12,16f.).

In this passage we are near the world of the dying Virgil, and it is evident that Broch here combines an existentialist diagnosis with a theory of culture. In an existentialist perspective, culture is something that transcends elemental human fear. In contrast, those value elements that cannot be integrated or assimilated by the ego, have an effect as premonitory and urgent moments which are symbols of metaphysical fear, symbols of death itself:

> Alle Weltbestandteile, welche vom Ich nicht einverleibt sind oder nicht einverleibt werden können, wirken als Angstmahnungen, als Symbole der metaphysischen Angst, als Symbole der Todeseinsamkeit, als Symbole des Todes schlechthin. Sie sind Ich-fremd, und alles "Fremde" wird solcherart zum Angst-Symbol, m. a. W. wird zum Gegenstand der tiefsten metaphysischen Abneigung, zum symbolischen Objekt für den Todes-Haß. Niemals wäre zu verstehen, daß ein weißer Fleck auf der Landkarte für die Menschheit derart beunruhigend sein könnte, wie er es eben ist, niemals wäre zu verstehen, daß zu seiner Bewältigung gefahrvolle und kostspielige Expeditionen in an sich höchst gleichgültige Gegenden geschickt werden, wenn er nicht jenes symbolische Beunruhigungselement in sich trüge, das eben das der metaphysischen Fremd-

> heit ist, wenn durch seine Bewältigung nicht Wertgefühle ausgelöst werden würden, die weit über den praktischen Wert und die praktischen Ergebnisse einer geographischen Expedition hinausgingen (KW12.17–18).

There are different levels of the enlargement of the Ego to make the world familiar and banish the fear. Real enlargement of the Ego by clothes, by property and power, by love and violence, both the extreme poles of a break-through to the human neighbor; there are also illusionary enlargements such as drunkenness or symbolic enlargements by rational knowledge.

There are, as Broch points out in his second draft *Entwurf für eine Theorie massenwahnartiger Erscheinungen* from 1941 (KW12,43–66), two ways of dealing with this elementary fear. One is to accept and realize it, this is the way of "irrationality enrichment," the other one — "rationality impoverishment" — is to try to suppress and remove it. The first one, in which the ego is the world, Broch also identifies with love, the second one, in which the ego tries to possess the world, with violence. In violence there is the wish to catch the irritating, the foreign other, whereas in the case of love one accepts that the foreign other will be outside of you and that it is impossible to assimilate him/her/it. Like death, love marks — as later in the philosophy of Emmanuel Lévinas[25] — the boundary of the possibility of cultural marking a territory (KW12,17–25).

Culture, far from being only a system of regulation (as in Freud's *Unbehagen*) is the way of enlargement of the ego and the way of fear-reduction. There is a clear difference between Freud and Broch, because the author of *Der Tod des Vergil* sees religion as the heart of culture and as a symbolic medium to work on fear. For Broch ecstasy is the highest form of liberation from fear. In contrast, panic is the loss of hope of being liberated from inescapable fear, the origin of the modern masses. It is not the longing to overcome the fear of touch (as in Canetti), but panic itself that fears the building of the masses. That is the goal of a value system as Broch remarks in his third piece, *Eine Studie über Massenhysterie: Beiträge zu einer Psychologie der Politik* from 1943 (KW12,67).

Already in his second essay Broch brings out — and this marks a difference from Freud and Canetti — that the genesis of the masses has to be seen also in historical, social, economical and cultural perspectives. There are ages in which phenomena of mass psychology play an enormous role. The preconditions may be social, cultural or political. The appearance of the masses is linked to the structure and the existence of

classes, states and parties but also with catastrophic political, natural or economic events. In some of his essays Broch refers to specific modern mass-phenomena such as the dominance of the pictorial element in the media, the paradigm of sport, and the tyranny of money and measurement (KW12,21). They all symbolize for Broch, as for Adorno and T. S. Eliot, the longing of crowds that are threatened by panic. Here is the opportunity to acquire what Broch calls "Superbefriedigung," an additional satisfaction which is an anesthesia of fear by mobilizing collective aggressive instincts. The "Superbefriedigung" can be defined in contrast to authentic ecstasy as a pseudo-ecstasy (KW12;22,56f,365ff.).

III

Broch also deals with the role of the leader, and here his position lies between Freud, who argues that leadership is essential for the genesis of masses, and Canetti, who resolutely denies the importance of the leader. For Broch, the leader transforms the mass into a historical issue by giving it a direction and a goal. The appearance of a leader in a mass movement also indicates the dimension of despair. Broch's dualistic concept, which always assesses the difference between the positive and healthy integration of the foreign other and the negative and self-destructive rejection of it, distinguishes between the authentic founder of religion and the demonic demagogue. They represent different eras and different systems of belief. Broch suggests that there is an intrinsic connection between a closed system based on a fixed value-dogmatic and a closed mass. The open system is based on the presupposition that the world is indefinite and that the absolute is only an indefinite remote destination, which can never be reached. An open system is able to balance the individual and society by producing a maximum of material security, emotional security and epistemological security (KW12;49f,76,250ff). Broch's concept of mass hysteria and mass mania is normative from the very beginning. The interesting point is, that it is not the contemporary civil society, but the Augustinian *civitas dei*, which in his ranking comes first. In other words: Broch, who favors a new socialism beyond the totality of Communism and fascism (KW12,375), is a left-liberal communitarian.[26]

This has to do with the fact that Broch sees the capitalistic bourgeois systems in decline as he has described in his *Schlafwandler* trilogy. Modern society is unable to provide material, symbolic, or emotional security. Thus, as in the Middle Ages the breakdown of the value system appears unavoidable. Panicked mass movements result owing to emotional and symbolic disintegration. Modern mass movements are characterized by

extreme panic, and thus they need leaders who promise to liberate them from this panic and to produce reparation and revenge, a sadistic mode of super-satisfaction.

Broch constructs a philosophy of history that resembles Spengler's cycles, at least in two of Broch's versions.[27] The first version includes four stages: stage 1: The making absolute of the value-system (withdrawal of reality control) leads to stage 2: Hypertrophy and autonomy (mass mania from above) leads to stage 3: Shaking of the absolute value system (reality-proof) leads to stage 4: Emancipation of the lower value systems value fragmentation (Mass mania from below) (KW12,54f.). In a later version Broch modifies his model by adapting the figure of the neurotic and psychotic in his theoretical framework. Whereas the neurotic is in permanent struggle because of the difference between inside and outside reality, the symbolic system of the psychotic is closed and he is quite carefree, with no worry about victory or defeat. So history becomes a psychic cycle in which normality changes with neurosis and psychosis: stage 1: Domination of the central value-system; stage 2: Disintegration, which becomes hypertrophied (psychosis); stage 3: Establishing of "Reality"; stage 4: Value-fragmentation (neurosis) (KW12,292).

For Broch, there is no doubt that modern mankind suffers from fragmentation and disintegration. Therefore the appearance of panicked masses will continue until a new value system has been established. At the same time, there is a lack of material security. So what modern societies need is both religion as well as a sort of democratic and open Marxism. Thus, Broch delivers a concept that is ambitious and unwieldy. Its contradictions — far from being the result of the fragmentary character of the work or the trans-disciplinary approach he had in mind — are obvious. There is, for example, the contradiction between his philosophy of history and his normative concept: Broch's deterministic historic-philosophical point of view contrasts with his fight for humanistic or post-humanistic culture. His ambivalence in regard to culture and religion, but also to Marxism, anticipates a postmodern ambivalence, whereas the polarity of his concept — the polarity between irrationality-enrichment and rationality-impoverishing — is obviously the result of a psychological point of view, which obeys the binary system healthy/ill. This discourse is linked to a political and normative one. Despite Broch's deep pessimism in regard to his own era, his work includes an optimistic message: the healthiest solution in politics and culture is also the best under ethical aspects. In some respects his thinking is problematic but in many ways quite contemporary. His ideas on culture, which anticipate some ideas of contemporary German *Kulturwissenschaften,* and his ideas

of the foreign Other can be compared with the ideas of Kristeva[28] or Lévinas. There is no doubt that his ideas on human rights are quite topical today. In this way, one could say, that Broch is a much more political and moralistic thinker than Freud or Canetti. In addition, his psychological approach, although it may be some sort of modern *talmi* religion, has become a part of the symbol system of our postmodern culture.

The analyst of cultural fragmentation proves himself to be a fragmented analyst. The hope we have in response to Broch's pessimism is that it is possible to live fragmentarily without being a victim of new totalitarian mass movements that produced the super-super-satisfaction of the Shoah, the perfect crime, because of the closed system of mass mania, which he has described as a result of panic.

Three concepts of the masses thus exist, with great ambitions and with universal claims of recognition: "the masses" and libido, the masses" and the fear of touch, "the masses" and the *horror vacui*. To respect historical greatness it is helpful to be modest. But to be modest may also be a contribution to wisdom, because all these theories try to explain everything. And this is too much. It would be interesting to subject them to an endurance test. The 11th of September 2001 may have been such a test. I think here of Canetti's double-masses (two antagonistic masses), but also of Broch's concept of panic. All these concepts have besides their universal and anthropological claim of recognition something in common: they all meditate about the masses without looking at media and media change. But the existence of the modern masses is due not least to the existence of media that organize virtually millions of people on a national and global level.

Notes

[1] Broch's mass-psychological fragments have been edited competently in KW12.

[2] Heimito von Doderer, *Die Dämonen. Nach der Chronik des Sektionschefs Geyrenhoff* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1995), 624.

[3] See also Diemar Goltschnigg, "Robert Musil und Hermann Broch — (K)ein Vergleich unter besonderer Berücksichtigung von Elias Canettis Autobiographie," in: Hartmut Steinecke and Joseph Strelka (eds.), *Romanstruktur und Menschenrecht bei Hermann Broch* (Bern: Peter Lang, 1990), 135–51.

[4] Robert Musil, *Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften* (Reinbek: Rowohlt 1979), 1932f.

[5] See also Rolf Schuhmann, *Die Massenwahntheorie im Spiegel der Autorenkrise: Gewalt, Anarchie und die Kunst der Sublimierung im Werk Hermann Brochs* (Frankfurt/Main: Peter Lang, 2000), 10–26 and Francisco Budi Hardiman, *Die Herrschaft*

der Gleichen: Masse und totalitäre Herrschaft. Eine kritische Überprüfung der Texte von Georg Simmel, Hermann Broch, Elias Canetti und Hannah Arendt (Frankfurt/Main: Peter Lang, 2001).

[6] Sigmund Freud, *Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse/Die Zukunft einer Illusion* (Frankfurt/Main: S. Fischer, 1993), 41. See also Serge Moscovici, *The Age of the Crowd* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1985).

[7] Stefan Zweig, *Die Welt von Gestern. Erinnerungen eines Europäers* (Frankfurt/Main: S. Fischer, 1970), 14–43.

[8] Moscovici, *The Age of the Crowd,* 223.

[9] Robert Musil, *Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften,* 1019–20.

[10] Karl Marx, *The eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (Chicago: Charles Kerr, 1913).

[11] Elias Canetti, *Die Fackel im Ohr. Lebensgeschichte 1921–1931* (Munich: Hanser, 1980), 281.

[12] Hannah Arendt — Hermann Broch, *Briefwechsel 1946–1951* (further quoted as ABB), edited by Paul Michael Lützeler (Frankfurt/Main: Jüdischer Verlag, 1996), letters 36, 37, 40, 43–44 and 46 (between 20 February and 28 June 1949). When Arendt and Broch exchanged their manuscripts Arendt commented positively Broch's revision of his Naturrecht-concept of human rights, and Broch explicitly praised Arendt's chapter on human rights in her book on totalitarianism (ABB, 94–126).

[13] Sigmund Freud, *Warum Krieg? Das Unbehagen in der Kultur und andere kulturtheoretische Schriften* (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 1994), 165–77.

[14] Elias Canetti, *Das Augenspiel. Lebensgeschichte 1931–1937.* (Munich: Hanser, 1985), 23–43. Canetti interprets the growing distance between Broch and him as a result of Broch's uncritical view of Freud ("Dieser war Freud verfallen," 31).

[15] See Elias Canetti, *Masse und Macht* (Frankfurt/Main: Fischer, 1980), 559: "Wer der Macht beikommen will, der muß den Befehl ohne Scheu ins Auge fassen und die Mittel finden, ihn seines Stachels zu berauben."

[16] Ernst Weiss, *Der Augenzeuge* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1999), 150: "Er [H.] stand nicht mehr oben auf der roh zusammengezimmerten Tribüne, er war neben uns, in uns, in dem Verborgensten wühlte er umher, und er zermalmte uns mit seinem sklavischen Wollustglück, gehorchen, sich auslöschen, unten sein, nichts mehr sein."

[17] See Moscovici, *The Age of the Crowd,* 219–29.

[18] See Hermann Broch, *Die Verzauberung:* "Zweifelsohne kann man ein massenpsychologisches Geschehen durch 'objektive Darstellungen' lebendig machen: man kann einen Flagellantenzug darstellen, oder das Gebrüll bei einem Fußballmatch, oder die Volksmengen vor dem Reichskanzlerpalais, von dessen Balkon aus Hitlers merkwürdige Stimme ertönt, und man kann auch alle Pogromschrecken sehr anschaulich schildern; aber alle diese Schilderungen sind — auch wenn sie einen historischen Hintergrund haben — gewissermaßen leere Behauptungen, sie sagen bloß aus, daß es massenpsychische Bewegungen gibt, verschweigen jedoch alles über deren eigentliche Funktion und Wirksamkeit. Will man hierüber Bescheid haben, so muß man die Einzelseele befragen [. . .]. Innerhalb des Massenpsychischen ist der Einzelmensch

ohneweiters bereit, die plumpsten Lügen als Wahrheit zu nehmen, sind Männer von großer Nüchternheit und Selbstkritik für die phantastischesten Unternehmungen zu gewinnen, brechen archaische Tendenzen auf, die man längst in dem Abgrund der Zeit gedacht hat, hebt ein mythisches Denken innerhalb aller Realität an-, nur die Einzelseele, welche zur Beute solcher Unbegreiflichkeiten wird, vermag hierüber Aufschluß zu geben" (KW3,383).

[19] See also — in explicit contrast to Freud — Hermann Broch, *Massenwahntheorie:* "Der Führer ist der Exponent eines Wertesystems und der Träger der Dynamik diese Systems. Er erscheint, wie gesagt, vor allem als Symbol des Systems. Seine rationalen Züge und Handlungen sind von untergeordneter Bedeutung" (KW12,81). In contrast to the *Massenwahntheorie* Broch's novel *Die Verzauberung* (KW3) favors a more Freudian analysis. In all of its three versions there is a strong emphasis on the sexual transfer between Marius Ratti, the leader who comes from the outside world into a mountainside village, and Irmgard, die "Bergbraut" who represents the rural collective and the victim of the collective mass hysteria.

[20] Elias Canetti, *Masse und Macht,* 13: "Nichts fürchtet der Mensch mehr als die Berührung durch Unbekanntes. Man will *sehen,* was nach einem greift, man will es erkennen oder zumindest einreihen können. Überhaupt weicht der Mensch der Berührung durch Fremdes aus."

[21] See also Rolf Schuhmann, *Die Massenwahntheorie,* 35–39.

[22] Elias Canetti, *Das Augenspiel,* 37: "Er [Broch] stand übrigens so sehr zu Freud, daß er auch gar nicht davor zurückscheute, dessen termini in ihrer vollen, unangezweifelten Bedeutung in einem ernsten und spontanen Gespräch zu verwenden. Angesichts seiner großen philosophischen Belesenheit mußte mir das Eindruck machen, so unangenehm ich es empfand, daß er Freud selbst Kant, den er sehr verehrte, Spinoza und Plato gleichstellte. Was im damaligen Wiener Wortgebrauch zu alltäglicher Banaliät geraten war, sprach er neben Worten aus, die durch die Verehrung von Jahrhunderten, auch durch seine eigene, geheiligt waren."

[23] See Gernot and Hartmut Böhme, *Das Andere der Vernunft. Zur Entwicklung von Rationalitätsstrukturen am Beispiel Kants* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1992).

[24] See Rolf Schuhmann, *Die Massenwahntheorie,* 9–13. I agree that Broch's concept refers to Rudolf Hermann Lotze, Max Weber and Heinrich Rickert but — not to forget — also to Georg Simmel, whom Broch studied quite intensively. See also Wolfgang Müller-Funk, *Die Kultur und ihre Narrative. Eine Einführung* (Vienna, Heidelberg, New York: Springer, 2002).

[25] Emmanuel Lévinas, *Die Zeit und der Andere* (Hamburg: Meiner, 1984), 5–7. In this early version of Lévinas's theory of the other, love is neither a possibility nor our initiative. It is a contingent moment: we fall in love, but nevertheless our self survives.

[26] In regard to Broch's third-way position see his letter to Hannah Arendt. He denies the invitation to the Berliner "Kongreß für kulturelle Freiheit" because he wants to avoid being used as a political instrument in the context of the Cold War: "[. . .] in Berlin habe ich wirklich nichts verloren." Hannah Arendt who agrees with Broch replies polemically: "Diese ungarischen Juden à la Koestler werden dadurch nicht angenehmer, daß man Hitler das Recht absprechen mußte, sie totzuschlagen" (ABB, 142, 145).

[27] See Paul Michael Lützeler, "Brochs *Schlafwandler* und Spenglers *Untergang des Abendlandes,*" in: P. M. L., *Europäische Identität und Multikultur* (Tübingen: Stauffenburg, 1997), 87–105.

[28] Julia Kristeva, *Strangers to Ourselves* (New York, London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991).

II.
Hermann Broch
The Novelist and Dramatist

Inscriptions of Power: Broch's Narratives of History in *Die Schlafwandler*

Kathleen L. Komar

I

IN PREPARING THIS ESSAY I discovered that rereading Hermann Broch's *Die Schlafwandler* after having been away from it for several years is like taking a literary Rorschach test. You discover what is really on your own mind at the moment of critical reception. I was very impressed, for example, with how cleverly Broch had anticipated the business metaphors and practices that would dominate every part of our lives — and perhaps most annoyingly our academic lives — over the past decade. I was convinced that Broch had understood resource-centered management and its ruthless and dehumanizing consequences long before it debilitated a number of American universities in the 1980s and 90s. I was sure that Broch had foreseen the fact that business models and management schools would monopolize university life — and that we would end up with a Harvard MBA as our president.

But I then recalled that every time I had read Broch's trilogy, I was equally impressed with his prescience. When I first encountered the "Huguenau" section twenty-eight years ago, I presumed that Broch had predicted Adolf Hitler and had described what facilitated his rise to power. When I taught the book ten years ago, I would have sworn he had foreknown the philosophical positions of post-structuralism and deconstruction. Five years ago, I was certain that Broch had scooped both Hayden White and Jean-Francois Lyotard.[1] Strangely enough, despite being painfully and self-consciously aware of what we might term the "prophetic fallacy," I am not sure these readings of Broch as seer of the Twentieth Century are that far afield. To suggest why and how I have these experiences reading Broch, I would like to focus today on Broch's uncanny ability to act as a cultural historian. And I'd like to look at Broch's work particularly with Hayden White's notion of history as emplotted narrative in mind.[2]

In *Tropics of Discourse,* White argues for the structural and linguistic similarities between fiction and history.[3] He wants to underline the fact that history is also a constructed narrative, that the historian who seeks to tell a particular story among many possible stories weaves data into a plot. White's stress on the constructed nature of history that must be emplotted into a narrative is what interests me here. White discusses twentieth-century authors who "attempt to liberate Western man from the tyranny of the historical consciousness" (39–40). While Broch is not among them,[4] I would argue that he should be — although what he produces is not liberation from a sense of historical coherence but rather an ineluctable understanding of our loss of it. Among other things, White argues for the historian to admit that he "seeks to exploit a certain perspective on the world that does not pretend to exhaust description or analysis of all of the data in the entire phenomenal field but rather offers itself as *one way among many* of disclosing certain aspects of the field" (46). Broch certainly anticipates White in that he is quite conscious of the partial nature of his narrative fragments, and the fragmentation of his narrative style conveys the painful fragmentation he sees in history and philosophy.

Broch comes irresistibly to mind also when we read the following quotation by White (with loud echoes of Foucault whose work deeply influences White and constitutes the source of the last chapter of *Tropics of Discourse*):

> . . . if the present generation needs anything at all it is a willingness to confront heroically the dynamic and disruptive forces in contemporary life. The historian serves no one well by constructing a specious continuity between the present world and that which preceded it. On the contrary, we require a history that will educate us to discontinuity more than ever before; for discontinuity, disruption, and chaos is our lot. (50)

White is writing in 1978, but Broch clearly recognizes in 1932 the dynamic and disruptive forces that lead to discontinuity and chaos in the modern world. Broch reveals, however, that understanding those forces in cultural history does not lead to the liberation White envisions. However, being able to surrender the desire for continuity and wholeness, being able to manipulate the discontinuity and chaos into a convincing narrative will be an indispensable talent that will allow a character like Huguenau to become the heir to power.

In 1986 Dominick LaCapra took up the issue of Broch as cultural historian.[5] Like a number of his fellow critics, LaCapra focused on

Broch's "Zerfall der Werte" essays as well as *Hofmannsthal und seine Zeit* to analyze Broch's insights into his own time.[6] I would like to continue this discussion of Broch as a recorder of history, but I would argue that Broch's most perceptive historical discussions are embodied not just in his discursive essays but even more powerfully in the plot that he weaves with his fictional characters and in a symbolic narrative that is literally inscribed on the bodies of his characters as traces of the power and violence exerted against them, by individuals or armies or society itself. This emplotted rather than theorized history teaches the reader a very different lesson from Bertrand Müller's essays.

II

Broch entices us to expect an historical account in *Die Schlafwandler* by structuring the time frame of his trilogy along traditional "historical" lines by basing it on the rule of Kaiser Wilhelm II, who came to power in 1888 and reigned until 1918. Despite invoking a traditional sense of history in this way, Broch's own notion of history subscribes to the idea that history is revealed not by recording the activities of the great political leaders but by following the development of the common man, who himself inescapably embodies the style of an era as well as its ineluctable problems. Broch produces a history that is composed not of a coherent metanarrative, but rather of little narratives that run in parallel but do not produce continuity.

By invoking our expectations of history and then subverting them, Broch leads us to understand many of White's points. As the trilogy opens, Broch consciously ties his characters to various historical periods and figures. Just as Pasenow senior is linked to the old Kaiser Wilhelm by his whiskers, Joachim v. Pasenow resembles Wilhelm II in his succession to his inheritance as the second in line (after Joachim's dead brother Heinrich). However, what will be crucial for Broch is not really the resemblances to great historical figures, but the narratives to be spun by following the minor figures through the historical and philosophical maze they must negotiate. As White will suggest in the late 1970s and 80s, Broch creates his history by emplotting the experiences of those characters. Most crucially, Broch's history as constructed narrative[7] will follow traces of power and authority as they are inscribed in the lives — and quite often on the very bodies — of his characters.

The idea of the body as a site of historical recording is introduced early in the text with a disquisition attributed to Eduard von Bertrand but clearly characteristic of Bertrand Müller's later essays. It traces the

uniform as a symbolic (and authority granting) covering for the body, which once belonged to the church and its sacred arena but which was eventually transferred to the secular power of the military.[8] The uniform as symbol retains its moral authority and power however. Pasenow feels most self-confident and morally secure when he is in his uniform, which encases and conceals his physical being and which he envisions as a defense against the obscenity of society and sexuality. On his wedding night, for example, he falls asleep next to his bride in his full uniform and even moves to adjust his jacket so that it covers the suggestive top of his trousers. Bertrand's giving up of his uniform confirms for Pasenow Bertrand's moral questionability and the degradation that is embodied in his connections with the business world.

The military uniform gives way more generally in Book II when theatrical dress and the lower reaches of the business world replace the military and the landed aristocracy. Ilona in her tights becomes the image of a crucified child, as she is literally the target of daggers thrown by those who have power over her. Although she is not herself marked by the knives that Teltscher throws, the revealing quality of her costume underscores her position of vulnerability. It is this vulnerability that Esch moves to protect by staging his female wrestling scheme and thereby saving Ilona from Teltscher. Ironically, however, Esch reproduces in his business venture precisely the same costume and the same implications of sexual vulnerability in his women wrestlers. They end up even more marked as sexually vulnerable when Teltscher decides to arrange for the costumes to rip in a revealing way.

Business imagery begins to dominate as Broch moves from Book I in 1888 to Book II in 1903. Joachim v. Pasenow's romantic vision of Elisabeth as part of a transcendent holy[9] family to be protected by the military hero as Book I closes is displaced by the image of women as business equipment whose sexuality is part of their economic value as objects to be viewed or bought. As history moves from the country estate to the industrial city and an increasingly global sense of business, the body (particularly the female body) becomes less protected by any socially coded dress and more available for economic use. Power becomes inscribed quite literally in the fabric of this society as well as in Broch's narrative surface. The symbolic costuming of the first two books is drastically superseded by direct inscriptions of power on the body itself in Book III.

Indeed, one of Broch's several narratives of history has to do with a struggle for the female body in order to gain power and dominion in the form of a family line, a son, the redeemer. In Book I, for example,

Joachim needs to gain control of Elisabeth's body in order to raise her to a higher level, to protect her from the cynicism of Bertrand and the degraded lust of Pasenow Sr. In Book II Esch seeks to gain dominion over Mutter Hentjen's body in order to set the cosmic sum of injustices right. He inscribes the mark of his power over her in the teeth marks he inflicts during sex as he attempts to replace Mutter Hentjen's first husband and take possession of her. Although Esch knows that she will not produce the redeemer, his possession of her is part of the plan that will lead to redemption at some future time. Both Joachim's and Esch's appropriations of the female end in a reduction of the female body to object (to be venerated in Elisabeth's case and beaten in Mutter Hentjen's).

The inebriated homosexual musician, Alfons, in Book II, who is mourning the death of Bertrand's gay lover, Harry, understands quite accurately that men like Esch need to appropriate the body of a woman in hopes of realizing their futile dreams of finding an absolute in the earthly realm through some eternal love. Alfons knows that this desire for an absolute will make men turn on the women they have appropriated when they realize that women are only symbols that cannot produce the absolute that the male protagonists seek. This epiphany on the part of the men leads to the impulse to abuse the women physically: by beatings in Mutter Hentjen's case or knife cuts in Ilona's. Neither the romanticized woman nor woman as cosmic symbol can fulfill the desire for an absolute that Joachim and Esch share. Elisabeth as Blessed Virgin in Book I gets no closer than Ilona who awakens next to Korn under an image of the Blessed Virgin in Book II.

In Book III, Huguenau is terrifyingly a-ethical in his vision of appropriating female bodies — whether the child's body of Marie or the motherly body of Frau Esch. Not yet fertile or infertile, these two female bodies become pure symbols like so much else in Book III. Rather than actually providing the means to a family and progeny and therefore persistence in history, these two females provide for Huguenau only the symbolic markers for child and wife. The appearance of family replaces any reality in Huguenau's wartime system. Indeed, it is only the appearance that has reality. Much like our own stock-market and our "dot-com" craze of the late 1990s, reality — and particularly value (either symbolic or economic) — here is in the mind of the beholder. What makes Huguenau's rise to power so terrifying is his ability to act on the symbol and on appearance with no ethical compunction or concern for any broader system of values whatever, and without the sense of betrayal that Esch suffers. Huguenau becomes the master narrator of the trilogy,

creating a fictional world that controls the "real" world around him, while Bertrand Müller's philosophical analyses of history can only lament that world's degradation.

Huguenau seems to fit the prescription by Hayden White in *Tropics of Discourse* that modern man and the modern creator of history must learn to live with and to use the discontinuity, disruption and chaos that marks modern culture. Huguenau operates entirely on appearances, on his own conviction of the success of his schemes and on the construction of fictional narratives with which he manages to manipulate the real world. And he succeeds. He eventually gains almost heroic distinction, legitimate traveling papers and economic and social status. He does so by murder, extortion and rape — but suffers no ill effects from his actions and has an untroubled conscience. Indeed, he becomes a model of success after the war. Huguenau has no trouble escaping the "tyranny of historical consciousness" that Hayden White fears can paralyze modern man.

The appropriated bodies we have been examining are not limited to those of females, however. In Book III, the male body bears the traces of power in much more direct ways than the women of the first two books. While Ilona may have knives thrown at her, Jaretzski has them inflicted directly on his body in his amputation. And while Elisabeth's face may merge with the landscape for Joachim, Gödicke's face and body are literally one with the dirt in which he is buried alive. The traces of history — of romantic views of unity and transcendence or the hope of mathematical balance — that are embedded in the minds of the male protagonists in Books I and II are inscribed directly on the bodies of the men of Book III.

III

But let's return for a moment to more general traces of power and its movement through history in Broch's trilogy by examining the opening gestures of the three volumes. Each of the three books begins with an image of power and authority, usually being exercised against the primary male protagonist. Book I opens with the description of Pasenow senior, who, by resembling the old Kaiser, inscribes power and authority in the traditional nineteenth-century guise of family and king. Ernestine Schlant in "Obsessive Patterns in the Novels of Hermann Broch,"[10] sees the elder Pasenow as "the first of many weak father figures" (154). But he is initially presented not as weak but as overbearing and powerful. He controls the family, the estate, and the maids. He is sexually aggressive, financially secure and in control of the lives around him. While he later

descends into senility, he begins as a fearful, mythic creature. His reddish blond hair gives him a demonic tinge, and the three-leggedness produced by his cane reminds readers of the riddle of the Sphinx as well as a devilish image of a dog on three legs. As the narrative begins, Pasenow's power and authority are about to be visited upon his son.

Although Pasenow senior deteriorates into senility by the end of Book I (as his son will at the end of Book III), his power over his son holds as Joachim v. Pasenow does indeed marry Elisabeth (as his father demands) and even has an affair with Ruzena, whom his father "buys" with a fifty mark note in the first few pages of the text. But Pasenow senior recognizes in Bertrand the true inheritor of power and considers disinheriting Joachim in favor of this new corporate man.

Book I ends with a reestablishment not just of the bourgeois family, but of the holy family that Joachim has been envisioning from a Catholic Holy Card he saw as child. Elisabeth becomes his blessed virgin whose conception of a child can only be immaculate given the narrator's description of Joachim reclining on his wedding night in full dress uniform fully buttoned. Joachim has gained the nineteenth-century estate and the family, but his power resides — at least in his own mind — in his status as savior and guardian of some more idealized, abstract and romantic realm.

Book II opens with a new inscription of power in which authority is not familial but corporate. Esch's dismissal from his position marks a shift from Joachim's idealized and romanticized family on a country estate to the corporate, urban world. And while Joachim is never quite disinherited by his authority-wielding father, Esch *is* successfully terminated from his position as accountant, an occupation that will escalate to the cosmic realm by the end of the Book II as Joachim's position of father and head of family did by the end of Book I. Book II has no son — and no parent as Esch is constantly referred to as an "orphan." While the son/redeemer is constantly yearned for by Esch, his escalating dream of a redeemer or Führer will become a material nightmare when we progress to Book III where the son can only be embodied in the shattered remnant of Gödicke's body or in the ruthless world of Huguenau.

Bertrand, whom Pasenow senior recognized as the proper heir to the position of authority and power, but who calls the family, military and romantic order thoroughly into question in Book I, does in Book II actually inherit the role of wielder of power. As the image of corporate success, Bertrand becomes for Esch the embodiment of both the power to manipulate lives (Martin's, his young male lover's, Esch's own) and

of a cosmic miscalculation that Esch must put right in order to save his image of female transcendence, Ilona (as well as his sexual female, Mutter Hentjen).[11]

In Book II, Martin's crutches and one leg are reminiscent of Pasenow Sr.'s cane as a marker of authority, but here the marker is no longer either intimidating or effective. Crippled by the moral sense of the value of labor in a corporate world, which must maintain absolute control over its workers, Martin becomes not the father/king but the martyr. The cane of power of Pasenow Sr. or Martin's socialist crutches will be superseded in Book III to Gödicke's crutches and crushed body. Finally, Esch's body will become the recipient of the cane-like bayonet thrust of the new wielder of power — Huguenau.

Book II closes with another marriage and "family." But a much less holy or transcendent family than ends Book I. Esch cannot create a Blessed Virgin of Mutter Hentjen. She remains barren and cannot bear him the redeemer. On the other hand, Esch's transcendent female, Ilona, also does not become the holy mother that Elisabeth does at the end of book I. And rather than displaying an impulse to protect Mutter Hentjen as Joachim does Elisabeth, Esch beats her, inscribing his own limited powers directly on her body in a futile attempt to get her to understand his cosmic dream.

Book III inscribes another shift in power from the corporate world to a chaotic world at war. The authority of the military and its inviolable uniform from Book I is finally undermined as any emblem of power and morality as the less than common man, Huguenau, deserts. Echoing Bertrand's abandonment of the military, Huguenau is also, like Bertrand, a man of business. Huguenau is, however, all business. There is no father figure or political figure left to command him. Indeed, at the end of the book, Huguenau becomes a father figure to the debilitated Joachim who will not be calmed unless he is holding Huguenau's finger in a return to a childhood in which Joachim is again powerless. Huguenau himself comes to represent a degraded paternal, economic and social authority that finally succeeds in appropriating the power and domination exercised against Broch's first two protagonists. And he gains power and authority precisely by creating narratives. His section might better be titled "the narrativist" rather than the English rendering, the "realist."[12] Huguenau creates reality (and history) out of his own ability to emplot events and convince his fellow citizens of the value of his narrative.

While Huguenau's authority during wartime is degraded in every way and created only of illusion, he returns to a comfortable bourgeois world after the war. He becomes quite literally the father who provides

real economic security for his family and is never troubled by moral scruples regarding his wartime deeds. The consummate businessman, Huguenau even demands from the woman he has raped and widowed payment for the newspaper business he has swindled her out of. And in a final devastating inscription of the power of corrupted corporate and legal authority over any moral or ethical sense, he gets his money.

IV

Individually asserted realities — or we might say, clever narratives — replace cosmic symbols as Broch emplots the disintegration of values into separate and physical systems that never converge while his narrator Bertrand Müller spells out the same development discursively. Jean-François Lyotard might call these narratives "little narratives" (*petit récit*). In *The Postmodern Condition,*[13] Lyotard explores the relationship between science and knowledge, and he sees narrative as a fundamental connection between the two. In analyzing the "Pragmatics of Narrative," Lyotard claims that "Narration is the quintessential form of customary knowledge . . ." (18), and he proposes a "parallel between scientific and nonscientific (narrative) knowledge" (26). Lyotard finds both kinds of knowledge to be equally important. He suggests that in the postmodern era:

> We no longer have recourse to the grand narratives — we can resort neither to the dialectic of Spirit nor even to the emancipation of humanity as a validation for postmodern scientific discourse. But as we have just seen, the little narrative [petit récit] remains the quintessential form of imaginative invention, most particularly in science. (60)

I would suggest that this might equally well fit Broch's *Schlafwandler,* particularly Book III.[14] No longer shaped by a unifying organon embedded in philosophy or religion, history becomes a residue of an unconscious will to power and domination that is inscribed both in language and directly on the human body. Power is no longer wielded by the father (either aristocratic or bourgeois) or even by the industrial complex alone; it is distributed among competing systems of economic, political, religious and physical domination that can be combined in any number of ways,[15] as Huguenau knows only too well. The interaction of various characters (Müller, the Salvation Army girl, the young Jew, the bored wife, the maimed war veteran, the deserter, etc.) produces myriad power structures that can be manipulated by anyone ruthless enough to foist his system upon the rest of the population, or clever enough to make his narrative the master emplotment of events.

Much of Broch's later work in mass psychology as well as his political activism will spring from this devastatingly clear narrative perception of mass manipulation by the ruthless domination of a relentlessly strong-willed individual. It may be, however, that the power of his early narrative embodiment of history remains his most influential contribution. If we follow the emplotted history in Broch's *Schlafwandler* rather than Bertrand Müller's theoretical analysis of history, we learn a very different lesson from Broch's trilogy. First we discover that those who continue to believe in a unifying myth and to seek an authority that gives meaning to the whole are debilitated and open to destruction. Joachim v. Pasenow ends pitifully hanging on to Huguenau's finger, and Esch ends with Huguenau's bayonet in his back.

Even those who retain nostalgia for some absolute system (as Bertrand Müller does) face an ongoing decline. The philosopher of history, Müller, can analyze the "Zerfall der Werte" in western culture and trace the progression from the unified religious organon of the middle ages to the splintered early Twentieth Century in which no center of values remains and our world has fragmented into many competing value systems: economic, social, political, religious and finally simply personal. He understands what Lyotard will eventually describe in *The Postmodern Condition* as "incredulity toward metanarratives" (xxiv), a loss of faith in a universal unifying structure. But he is not happy about it. Nor is Broch. Müller's own writings outside of the essays are marked by what Lyotard describes as the postmodern condition in which: "the narrative function is losing its functors, its great hero, its great dangers, its great voyages, its great goal. It is being dispersed in clouds of narrative language elements" (xxiv). In light of Broch's 1932 trilogy, this statement seems to come about fifty years late. It could just as well describe Müller's own competing lyrical, narrative and philosophical fragments in Book III of the trilogy.

We can feel Müller's and Broch's unhappiness over the state of the world in the Epilogue where the narrator speculates that even the successful Huguenau must sometimes be made uneasy by a subconscious perception of the disunity of the world. The narrator suggests that if Huguenau were to think about it longer, he would understand that the world of values was disintegrating into mere symbols that could not escape being arbitrary and fortuitous. The philosophical narrator is sure that such thoughts must plunge the thinker of them into an abyss of depression such as he himself inhabits. But Huguenau does not occupy this nadir of anxiety. He is not given to such thoughts, and boxing his child on the ears for no reason easily dissipates any uneasiness he may

feel. A bit of physical aggression cures Huguenau of his anxiety; the narrator (and Broch himself) are left to feel the intense anguish at the state of a world of disintegrating values.

The second lesson we learn from Broch's emplotted narrative of history is that, to be in control, one needs to learn to manipulate appearances and thereby dominate the psychology of others. If you can manipulate the symbols, you win. Huguenau doesn't actually manipulate objects, but rather symbols and appearances. He affects the real world by manipulating signs. This is surely another reason why Huguenau would not be traumatized by the realization that the world is held together only by arbitrary signs. And it is one explanation as to why Huguenau loves the printing press so much that it takes on erotic overtones. The machine is a modern construction that creates symbols and allows Huguenau to manipulate the psyches of his fellow citizens.

Third, the lover of philosophical analysis, Bertrand Müller, actually loses faith in the symbols he manipulates (words, philosophical ideas, and even his own characters) and thereby becomes withdrawn and debilitated. The man of thought, Müller, grows weaker as the man of action, Huguenau, grows stronger. Müller ceases to have any effect in the real world in which he, like Pasenow and Esch, can no longer find a unifying myth. Even Broch's epilogue, which he argues presents a positive ending, really offers only a wish-fulfillment dream. Müller's discursive sections of the book slide into near despair which Broch attempts to temper (unsuccessfully I think) with a very ambiguous reference to Paul's words in the *New Testament*[16] as the volume closes: "Tu dir kein Leid! denn wir sind alle noch hier" (KW1,716).

V

In fact, in the epilogue, Müller and Huguenau, whom I have been describing as opposite poles of the thinking and acting man, temporarily merge. Müller directly narrates Huguenau's thoughts, as well as that which Huguenau is incapable of thinking, namely, the philosophic problems that underpin his existence. The fiction has become the raw material upon which the logic of the philosopher works; it has become an indispensable link in the chain of causal relationships that makes up the philosophical inquiry; it becomes, in fact, the final truth that the philosophical ruminations seek to comprehend. Rather than providing a prescriptive model for living, the philosophical meditation has been drawn into the extremely negative descriptive model established by the fiction. The emplotted, narrative history of the fictional sections

overwhelms the analytic vision of history presented in the philosophical sections.

The philosophical analysis is forced to bend back upon itself in the Epilogue and to conclude that the very search for the absolute in this age of subjective relativity has become an engine of endless destruction. The age-old philosophical inquiry into truth, the rational analysis of existence, has become a self-devouring project in an age in which reason has lost its vigor and the absolute becomes an arbitrary imposition upon a recalcitrant world. Broch hopes to redeem this reduction of humanity to the zero point in his last few pages. The force and prophetic accuracy of his vision of destruction cannot, however, be canceled out by the biblical closing admonition.

The merging of the non-fictional genre of the philosophical essay and the fictional narrative in the epilogue obliterates the possibility of philosophy rehabilitating the depiction of crass reality by some elevated logical process. Philosophy may retain its logical form and its abstract mode of discourse, but the logical form has become a mold for the illogical and problematic reality it seeks to understand. Despite Broch's attempt to bend it back into logos, into theological discourse with a biblical tone, philosophy becomes the microscope of the radically subjective and relative individual system rather than the magnifying glass that allows man to concentrate the disparate rays of an absolute source of enlightenment into a focused system of thought and value. Thus, the separation of philosophical discourse from fiction and the privileging of the rational investigation of existence over the fictional presentation of it — which had begun in the Renaissance and gained strength during the Enlightenment — gives way as the novel ends to a unification of the two at the expense of philosophy's totalizing ability.

To further complicate matters, the philosopher himself (in this case Bertrand Müller), who is to arrive at the totality of a philosophical system, is at once the implied author of and a character within the fictional text and as such is caught in the same partiality and fragmentation that his essays dissect and seek to transcend.[17] The philosopher is, therefore, not a removed and privileged observer but a participant in the disintegration that he laments; he is the subjective value-positer that his own ninth essay discusses. His philosophical discourse is no more effective in staving off fragmentation and relativity than are his lyrical poems about the Salvation Army girl or his interpolated fictional narratives. Since Bertrand Müller in his essays comments upon the various characters of the Huguenau plot (including Huguenau himself) one might expect him to have the objective distance necessary for philosophical analysis and

critique. He is, however, also one of the struggling, subjective and isolated characters within the narrative he composes. Posing as the philosophical observer, he is nonetheless complicit in the disintegration depicted in the non-fictional sections of the book. The essayist and his opinions are thus relativized, but in Broch's view, this frees the essayist to escape his own logically philosophical discourse and to use his irrational intuition to provide a final enunciation of hope despite all logic. On the self-immolation of philosophical discourse, Broch attempts to build a new discourse of hope that combines the rational and irrational, reason and intuition.

Thus, surprisingly, as Helmut Koopman suggests[18] and as Broch himself was fond of pointing out, the trilogy ends not with the total destruction and negativity one might expect, but rather with words "voll Versöhnung und milder Hoffnung"(KW1,734–35). Rather than drawing the obvious conclusion from his trilogy — namely that the Western world and its culture have reached a point of ultimate failure and annihilation — Broch sees the situation as a turning point in the fate of Germany and the world, as a coming round to the zero point that will allow for rebirth. Despite the overpoweringly negative momentum of the work, Broch obstinately maintains (in spite of his own most profound philosophical perceptions and in spite of the radical relativization of the writer himself as figured by Bertrand)[19] that there is a oneness of all men that will eventually triumph over the bleak picture of deteriorating values and culture he has so effectively painted. Like Döblin at the end of *Berlin Alexanderplatz,* Broch blows the fanfare in the face of logical expectations and ends by hearkening to the voice of that collective unity of men, "die Stimme des Menschen," the voice of consolation and hope in Paul's words (KW1,716).

There are, however, several troubling aspects to the final redeeming paragraph of *Die Schlafwandler*. Part of the difficulty is Broch's attempt to curve the apocalyptic and linear historical design sections into the "unendliche Bahn des geschlossenes Ringes," into a vision of the closed circle which the "Führer" would tread to a new fulfillment. The linear thrust of the narrative, however, weakens and dwarfs the desperate mission of the last few paragraphs to create continuity. The murder of Esch, the reduction of Pasenow to childlike disorientation controlled by Huguenau, and the triumph of the conscienceless Huguenau — who never even calls to mind his murder of Esch or his rape of Esch's wife — and finally the compromised position of Bertrand Müller within his own narrative all lend the text a negative weight that makes the final reassurance of human community difficult to accept.

Even the language and style of the last paragraph with its abandonment of both narrative and philosophic discourse in favor of an almost theological discourse of "Messiashoffnung" has the effect of a desperately willful attempt to return to the speech of God, the pure logos, despite the fact that no one in the text is conditioned to hear it (nor, for that matter, is the reader). This shift represents not a reconciliation of the various forms of discourse in the text but an abandonment of all of them. Only a Kierkegaardian leap of faith could explain such an abrupt transition. And, indeed, Broch envisions his "Führer" in much the same way as Kierkegaard does his Knight of Faith: as a deceptively normal passer-by in the everyday world ("der Heilsbringer wandelt im unscheinbarsten Gewande und vielleicht ist es der Passant, der jetzt über die Strasse geht" [KW1,715]). But Kierkegaard realized that his Knight of Faith could have no voice, no discourse whatever, since the world could never understand the super-ethical position he would occupy. Broch's "Stimme des Menschen" is by definition excluded from Kierkegaard's vision of the man who attains true reunification with the absolute.[20]

And, finally, the shift to biblical tones and a theological discourse of hope recalls the earlier Bible readings and rhetoric of Esch and Pasenow. While the narrator's language at the novel's close is certainly more abstract and sophisticated than Esch's or Pasenow's, Broch undermines in advance the essentially religious hope underlying this language by the earlier depiction and critique of Esch's and Pasenow's older religious strategies. The ending of the trilogy, therefore, takes on the character of an anguished plea or wish more than that of a mystical annunciation.

Even the closing admonition is at best ambiguous in its positiveness. Manfred Durzak argues that the closing line's reference to chapter 63 of the novel links the ending to the positive figure of regeneration, Gödicke, and thus to a utopian vision.[21] Chapter 63 is the Bible reading scene in which Esch and Pasenow envision one another as possible redeemers until Huguenau arrives to dispel the visionary illusions. Gödicke does, indeed, represent in this scene the man who has reached the zero point (his virtual death) necessary for rebirth. He retorts to Esch's Bible reading that only one who has been dead can speak of rebirth. But Gödicke at this point is as eccentric and unfit to play either Messiah or "Führer" as the self-deceiving Esch and Pasenow — and the entire scene is disrupted by Huguenau and can, therefore, be read as a critique of the religious positions of each of the characters. In addition to this undercutting, the passage depicts Esch as interpreting the phrase "Tu dir kein Leid! denn wir sind alle noch hier!" as a command to accept our human imprisonment as Paul does in the biblical passage. It is thus difficult to

see the closing line as the positive vision of utopia or mythic unity many critics have described. Bertrand Müller in his prison of relativity and fragmentation does not seem to have the redeeming system to offer mankind that Paul in his biblical prison had. The emplotted, narrative version of history with Huguenau as its hero seems to overpower Broch's own desire for a future mythic reunification of existence.

Thus despite the optimistic reading many critics (as well as Broch himself) give the concluding lines, Broch may have shown more clearly than any writer of his time the arbitrary nature of what man had taken to be the organizing structures of his existence. Desperately anxious to be the harbinger of some new unifying order, Broch may well be instead one of the most accurate prophets of the postmodern age in which even the nostalgia for a totalizing and unifying system would be relinquished.

The final lesson of Broch's *narrative* in the trilogy, of the emplotted rather than analyzed history, is that the way to succeed in the world of 1918 or 1932 and later is not to lament the disintegration of values, but rather to learn confidently to create a reality that is not limited by external systems of value or morality. Esch almost succeeds in making this adjustment in Book II, but, like Bertrand the capitalist, he reverts to a belief in some greater wholeness that might yet be reestablished if we all continue to seek the redeemer. Huguenau gains *real* authority and power as Pasenow and Esch lose it. In the modern world neither inherited authority nor faith in a higher power ensures survival. Power and authority are to be created out of the economic and legal symbols that allow a person to manipulate the psyches around him. Our own ".com" economy is evidence of the wisdom of Broch's emplotted vision of the history to come. If there is a lesson to be gleaned by the reader, it is that we need to learn to use the symbolic on a practical level: on the level of manipulation of power and authority, that is, on the political level.

Broch himself would eventually seek to do precisely this in his turn toward political activism and his studies of mass psychology. In the *Schlafwandler* trilogy, however, Broch is still struggling with his own inclination toward a myth of unity and wholeness. Part of him is clearly aligned (as are a great many of us) with Bertrand Müller's lament at the disintegration of values. It is the tension between the lament and the pragmatic understanding of how the new world works that keeps Broch's trilogy as compelling today as it was in the 1930s.

Broch's dual approach of providing what Hayden White might call an emplotted history in the narratives of his three characters on the one hand, and a highly philosophically critical analysis of history on the other, gives the reader two different visions of what is at stake in recording

history. Is history really the constructed narrative of the common man? Or is it the analytic record of the philosophical impulses that guide and govern human activity at a given moment in time? In Broch's trilogy, history is written both ways. And while we might think of these two exercises as complementary, Broch reveals that they take us in two very different directions. What we learn from history, Broch implies, depends heavily on how it is presented and, as I have discovered over the last decades, on how we read it.

Notes

[1] Paul Michael Lützeler comes to a similar conclusion about Broch's relationship to Postmodernism in *Die Entropie des Menschen: Studien zum Werk Hermann Brochs* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2000), 43–44. Lützeler rightly points out that Broch, however, holds out hope for the future and a new beginning. Lützeler compares Broch to Richard Rorty, Fredric Jameson, Jean Baudrillard and Lyotard rather than to Hayden White, but our thoughts here run in parallel directions.

[2] White talks about constructing historical narrative and the interpretations that that construction implies in several of his works. He discusses emplotment specifically in "Historical Emplotment and the Problem of Truth in Historical Representation," in: *Figural Realism: Studies in the Mimesis Effect* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1999), 27–42.

[3] Hayden White, *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1978, 1985), 122.

[4] White's tastes seem to run more to French writers. He mentions Camus, Sartre, and Valéry. He does, however, cite Gottfried Benn (37).

[5] Dominick LaCapra, "Broch as Cultural Historian," in: *Hermann Broch: Literature, Philosophy, Politics: The Yale Broch Symposium 1986,* ed. Stephen D. Dowden (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1988), 42–53.

[6] A number of critics have done very enlightening studies linking Broch's "Zerfall der Werte" passages to various philosophers and thinkers. See, for example the special *Modern Austrian Literature* issue (vol. 13, no. 4, 1980), which included the following essays: Paul Michael Lützeler's "Broch, Lukács and die Folgen," (99–120), and Ernestine Schlant's "Hermann Brochs Auseinandersetzung mit dem Marxismus," (121–44). See also Thomas Edelmann's "Vernunft des Irrationalen oder Irrationale Vernunft? Arthur Lieberts Philosophie als Subtext der Wertzerfallessays Hermann Brochs," *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie* 118 (1999): 186–204; Andrew Bowie's "The Novel and the Limits of Abstraction: Hermann Broch's *Die Schlafwandler,*" *Journal of European Studies* 14.2 (1984): 96–116; Howard L. Kaye's "Hermann Broch's *The Sleepwalkers:* Social Theory in Literary Form," *Mosaic* XV.4 (1982): 79–89; and Mark W. Roche's "National Socialism and the disintegration of values: Reflections on Nietzsche, Rosenberg, and Broch," *The Journal of Value Inquiry* 26.3 (1992): 367–80, among many others. The range of disciplines and interdisciplinary journals that takes Broch's essays seriously is quite telling.

[7] The idea of consciously constructed narrative can be found in several of Broch's own texts as well as in White's. See for example the "Vorsatz" by the narrator of the novella "Methodisch konstruiert" of 1918, "Wir wollen uns daher keiner zufällig durch die Zeitung [. . .] uns zugewehten Geschichte hingeben, sondern uns diese in bewußter Konstruktion selber herstellen." Interestingly, this statement is quoted by Gisela Brude-Firnau, "'Zufällig durch die Zeitung'? Die Bedeutung der Tageszeitung für Hermann Brochs *Schlafwandler*," *The German Quarterly* 49.1 (1976): 31–44. As Brude-Firnau notes, Broch's extensive use of newspaper material is based on his own selection with his vision of the "Zerfall der Werte" in mind and with a conscious effort to construct a narrative from the data he culls.

[8] Paul Michael Lützeler in *Die Entropie des Menschen* discusses the uniform as part of his analysis of architecture and ornament in *Die Schlafwandler* (39–44). He points out that Gordon A. Craig also cites Broch's trilogy as an example of the importance of the uniform in Prussia in his extensive history *Germany, 1866–1945* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978).

[9] Lützeler takes up this notion in *Kulturbruch und Glaubenskrise. Broch's "Schlafwandler" und Grünewalds "Isenheimer Altar"* (Tübingen: Francke, 2001).

[10] Ernestine Schlant, "Obsessive Patterns in the Novels of Hermann Broch," in: *Hermann Broch: Literature, Philosophy, Politics,* 153–72.

[11] Paul Michael Lützeler's introduction to his volume *Die Entropie des Menschen* has a discussion of Broch's typing of women into the ideal and the erotic and the repercussions of that for his own life.

[12] Willa and Edwin Muir's English translation, *The Sleepwalkers* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1947), renders part three as "The Realist."

[13] Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota Press, 1984). Originally published as *La Condition postmoderne: rapport sur la savoir* (Paris: Les Editions de Minuit, 1979).

[14] In *Figural Realism: Studies in the Mimesis Effect* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1999), Hayden White recalls the debate among philosophers and historians over the status of narrative and the assertion by some historians that "Although narrative explanation differed from the mode of (nomological-deductive) explanation prevailing in the physical sciences, it was not to be considered inferior to it." (19).

[15] Lyotard, unlike Hayden White, cites Broch among the important figures who contribute to our understanding of the delegitimation of any metanarrative and the rise of a hopelessly relative system of competing, subjective smaller narratives. Lyotard suggests that "Turn-of-the-century Vienna was weaned on this pessimism [concerning the fragmentation of language into many systems]: not just artists such as Musil, Kraus, Hofmannsthal, Loos, Schönberg, and Broch, but also the philosophers Mach and Wittgenstein. They carried awareness of and theoretical and artistic responsibility for delegitimation as far as it could be taken" (41).

[16] Paul, *Acts of the Apostles,* Ch. 16.

[17] See Theodore Ziolkowski's "Hermann Broch und die Relativität im Roman," in: *Hermann Broch: Perspektiven der Forschung,* ed. Manfred Durzak (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1972), 315–27, for a more detailed analysis of the relativity of the narrator. I find persuasive Ziolkowski's use of Broch's letters to establish his direct

concern with the concept of relativity and its effect on narrative technique as well as Ziolkowski's analysis of Broch's creation of the experience of a world being relativized (by the late introduction of Bertrand Müller as the author of the lyrical and philosophical passages).

[18] See Helmut Koopmann's *Der klassische-moderne Roman in Deutschland* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1983).

[19] See Dorrit Cohn's chapter on Bertrand in *"The Sleepwalkers": Elucidations of Hermann Broch's Trilogy* (The Hague: Mouton & Co., 1966) for a detailed discussion of this point.

[20] See Kierkegaard's *Fear and Trembling* for a description of the Knight of Faith.

[21] Manfred Durzak, *Hermann Broch: Dichtung und Erkentnis* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1978), 78.

The German Colonial Aftermath: Broch's *1903. Esch oder die Anarchie*

Judith Ryan

I

I WILL ARGUE IN THIS ESSAY that *1903: Esch oder die Anarchie,* the middle novel of the *Schlafwandler* trilogy (KW1), can profitably be seen in terms of German colonialism. At first glance, it may appear as if the novel does little more than allude to overseas emigration, and that these allusions belong more properly to the tradition of the America motif as articulated by Goethe and his nineteenth-century successors than to the theme of colonialism as we understand it today.[1] In contrast to the detailed presentation of Wilhelmine Germany and two of its cities, Cologne and Mannheim, the parts of the plot that refer to Esch's longing to go to America seem to form a relatively underdeveloped counterpoint. Even if we combine these moments in Esch's phantasmatic self-construction with the reflective passages about settler-colonists that translate his individual psychology into a larger issue, the novel's overall emphasis hardly appears to be on colonialism. Imperial Germany as it constitutes itself on European soil is certainly at issue, but can we say that the novel also undertakes an analysis of colonialism?

A closer reading of the novel *Esch* in fact reveals that it explores in minute detail Germany's position on the colonial question in 1903 (the year in which this volume is set). It presents a very specific diagnosis of the historical, social, and economic factors that gave rise to the German Empire's understanding of the colonial question, while at the same time glancing forward to the rise of German nationalism and National Socialism. The link between German colonial thinking and these later movements is very much within the purview this novel delineates. Indeed, even its opening scene, in which the business clerk Esch finds himself dismissed by his boss, can be read as a hidden allusion to Bismarck's dismissal by Kaiser Wilhelm II, the political event that opened the way to Germany's more aggressive colonial ambitions. On the second page of the novel, Esch hears of a position he might (and in fact does) apply

for in a Mannheim shipping company — a neat reversal of Bismarck's departure from the German ship of state so memorably caricatured by John Teniel in the May 1890 issue of *Punch*. And, right after receiving the tip about the Mannheim job, Esch takes note of an oddly emblematic decoration in the pub he frequents: a small bronze Eiffel tower topped by the black-white-red flag of Imperial Germany and marked with the word "Stammtisch" (KW1,184). At first glance, this reading of the opening episode may seem daring. An account of the actual historical context and of the ways in which international relations are depicted in the novel will reveal the colonial dimension of the work.

Let me begin with a preliminary sketch of the colonialist element in *Esch* and move from there to the historical reality that informs it. August Esch first conceives of his plan to emigrate to America in the course of a conversation about another venture he is involved with, the women's wrestling match shows:

> "Weg, nach Amerika" [he thinks]. In einer illustrierten Zeitung hatte er Bilder aus New York gesehen; die stiegen jetzt auf; auch die Photographie eines amerikanischen Boxkampfes hatte es dort gegeben und dies führte zu den Ringkämpfen zurück. "Wenn ich mir das Fahrgeld rasch verdienen könnte, ziehe ich los." (KW1,234–35)

Not long afterward, he visits the theatre agent Oppenheimer, in whose office he sees a large framed poster of the steam liner *Kaiserin Auguste Victoria* depicted in bright colors, leaving harbor surrounded by smaller vessels and proudly cutting through the waves of the North Sea.[2] The poster is identified as a gift of the Hapag.[3]

The Hamburg-Amerika Paketschiff Aktiengesellschaft had been founded in 1843. The ship *Augusta Victoria* along with another double screw steamer, the *Columbia,* began to ply the trajectory between Hamburg and New York in 1889, at which time these two ships were the most rapid steam liners in the world.[4] When the shipping company celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in 1897, it received a congratulatory telegram from the kaiser, and issued a commemorative volume tracing its glorious history. Unfortunately, I have not been able to locate a copy of this book; I did find a copy of another illustrated volume, however, issued on the occasion of the Hapag's sixtieth anniversary in 1907. This book describes the economic position of Germany in 1903, the year in which *Esch* is set, as a year when Germany was only gradually emerging from a financial downturn, still plagued by intense competition from other industrial nations, and just beginning a renewed upward trend in overseas trading.[5] Now, it is known that the Hapag played an extremely

important role in German overseas emigration during the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century.[6] What is less well known (if at all) is that in 1903 there was a "Konkurrenzkampf" between the Hapag and the English Cunard Line for the custom of Hungarians wishing to emigrate from Europe. For about a year, these emigrants were transported for little or no cost.[7] The commemorative volume describes this competition between the two national shipping lines in terms of a battle or wrestling match: "Aber als gegen Ende des Jahres Frieden geschlossen wurde, zeigte sich, dass die Gesellschaft [i.e. Hapag] fast ohne Wunden aus dem gefährlichen Ringen hervorgegangen war." Throughout the larger period of Hapag's activity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, there were also other threats to its commercial sovereignty. Germans who wished to emigrate to America had two ways of paying for their travel: they could travel overland or by Rhine boat to Hamburg and pay for their steam ticket there, or they could pay in advance for both segments of their voyage. Numerous agencies recruited emigrants and facilitated their travel arrangements, and some of these were run by representatives from various American states and townships. These latter often preferred to book the emigrants via England, thus undercutting the business of the Hamburg-Amerika Line. Advertising for the emigrants around the turn of the century was a matter of sharp competition, and seductive advertisements, often emphasizing the swiftness of the steam ships concerned, appeared in daily newspapers and specialized magazines directed to potential emigrants.[8] There were many unscrupulous agents, as Friedrich Gerstäcker had noted as early as 1855, in his novel *Nach Amerika*.[9] More important in terms of background to *Die Schlafwandler* is the fact that national emigrants' associations were founded in Germany beginning in the mid-nineteenth century in an attempt to combat the self-interested activities of the individual emigration agents. In the late nineteenth century German colonial societies agitated to direct the exodus of German emigrants not toward North America, but to South America, where German-speaking colonies already existed that would support the retention of the home culture and language.[10] The Hapag began service between Hamburg and South America in 1901.[11] The obsession with South America faded in the early twenties, but when Broch was writing *Esch* there was still a very keen nationalist impulse within the colonial societies, an impulse that was subsequently appropriated by the National Socialists when they came to power just a few years later.[12] In the course of Broch's novel, Esch's fantasies shift from North to South America, mainly because he becomes persuaded that the women's wrestling matches would be better appreciated in

South America, which enjoyed a looser moral reputation in Germany at the time. I recount all these details to show how deeply embedded in actual history the novel is, even down to apparently slighter elements in its motivic structure.

Broch interweaves these facts about German emigration very carefully with the economic substratum of his novel. Here it will be helpful to look briefly at Rudolf Hilferding's important essay "Der deutsche Imperialismus und die innere Politik" (1903/4).[13] If Broch did not know this essay, he may have been familiar with its main ideas through Lenin's adaptation in *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism: A Popular Outline* (1917).[14] Many of Hilferding's theses bear a striking resemblance to Broch's analysis of German imperialism in *Esch*. Hilferding's central argument is that imperialism is an accompaniment of capitalism in its final stage. "Expansion ist die Lebensbedingung des Kapitals, und die Form, die heute diese Expansion annehmen muß [. . .] ist die der kolonialen Expansion."[15] In presenting this thesis, Hilferding is arguing that the overt claims made by proponents of German colonialism are a cover for economic motivations connected with the belated development of capitalism in Germany. Whereas other nations, like England and France, became industrialized, developed capitalist economies, and consolidated their acquisition of overseas colonies at more or less the same time, Germany was not able to profit from a similar configuration of simultaneous developments. Because there was no early decision to acquire overseas territories, German capitalism is doubly handicapped, first by its own late emergence, and second by the lack of colonies that might support its full development. Hilferding recognizes, of course, that Germany and the Hansa cities have long been involved in overseas trading. But he distinguishes between "Handel" and "Kapitalismus." His analysis of the call for more viable German colonies in the early years of the new century is a highly sophisticated one. He sees contemporary German colonial aspirations as a necessary reflex of the nation's attempt to consolidate its capitalist ideology. Colonies were not needed for trade, as the colonial societies often argued, but as a ventilating device for rapidly expanding German capitalism. "Nicht um Waren zu holen oder zu bringen, sondern um ein Stück Kapitalismus fix und fertig mitsamt dem Kapital aus Europa zu exportieren, dazu braucht man die Kolonien."[16] In Hilferding's view, Germany's scramble for colonies was nothing other than a distraction that prevented the people from perceiving that capitalism could not continue to expand unchecked and that socialism was the only viable alternative.[17] "Hier muß die sozialdemokratische Gegenwirkung einsetzen," he wrote. "Dem Programm des Imperialismus setzt sie die

freie Selbstbestimmung des Volkes im Innern, die Demokratie in Gesetzgebung und Verwaltung entgegen."[18] Hilferding closes his essay with a resounding call for the recognition that democracy in Germany must be identical with social democracy.

Hilferding's economic perspective on colonial politics lies at the heart of Esch's planned American venture. To begin with, it is not accidental that Esch is a bookkeeper, or that the first two jobs we see him engaged in are with large German shipping firms involved in overseas trade. When he abandons his job with the Mittelrheinische and invests in show business (women's wrestling matches), he only seemingly replaces a businessman's existence for that of an artist or bohemian. The socialist Martin Geyring calls Esch a victim of capitalism when he loses his job in Cologne (KW1,186), and a capitalist once he embarks on the women's wrestling match enterprise. And Esch himself, though also attracted by the show business, sees himself as a financial investor in the project, and is a little disappointed to find that Oppenheimer's office bears no resemblance to the offices of the Mittelrheinische shipping company (KW1,250).

What links the various spheres of Esch's activity is his economic interest. The shipping companies, the women's wrestling matches, and the pub all become emblems of imperialism in Esch's private fantasy world. A complex network of allusions to the Kaiser, on the one hand, and the concepts of democracy and freedom, on the other, link these spheres throughout the novel. To enter the enclosed harbor district in which the Mittelrheinisch shipping company is situated, Esch must first pass signs marking the entrance to the Imperial German Customs area (KW1,196). The Social Democrat assembly that ends with Geyring's arrest takes place, ironically, in a public house room decorated with portraits of the kaiser, the Grand Duke of Baden, and the King of Württemberg (KW1,227). In Esch's imagination, the president of the Mittelrheinisch company, Eduard von Bertrand, is "reicher als der Kaiser" and spends his leisure time on a motor yacht surrounded by "die schönsten Matrosen" (KW1,295). Again ironically, Bertrand is linked in Esch's mind with modern machines, the automobile and the motor yacht, a configuration that stands in distinct contrast to Wilhelm II's enthusiasm for his sailing yacht and for English sailing regattas. Unlike the Kaiser, Bertrand is also linked with America, an idea suggested to Esch by Geyring, who observes that Bertrand is always traveling abroad, to "Amerika und sonstwo" (KW1,325).

II

Albert Ballin, head of the Hapag during the late Wilhelmine period, may have inspired the figure of Bertrand.[19] The son of a Jewish agent for American emigration, Ballin was largely responsible for the shipping firm's rapid rise to success around the turn of the century. Like the fictional Bertrand, Ballin lived in a luxurious villa and constructed a palatial business building for the Hapag, into which the firm moved its offices in 1903.[20] An extremely influential businessman, Ballin was a vigorous opponent of the Social Democrats. Ballin's personal enmity was aimed at Walter Freyer, a social democrat and union leader who seems to have provided a partial model for the figure of Martin Geyring in *Esch*. The Hapag threatened union members with dismissal, and Albert Ballin went so far as to bring in English strike breakers to undermine socialist agitation. He even provided Hapag employees free performances at the Hamburg Schauspielhaus in the hope of shifting their interest away from social democrat assemblies.[21] The union newspaper, "Der Seemann," referred to Ballin scathingly as the "kapitalistische Bestie."[22] Ballin's concerted efforts to undermine the influence of his socialist opponent Walter Freyer succeeded, and eventually Freyer resigned his position.[23] An intimate of Kaiser Wilhelm II (he was known, especially to his enemies, as "der Freund des Kaisers"),[24] Ballin committed suicide when the German Empire was vanquished in 1918.[25]

Not unlike the recruiting agents who persuaded Germans to emigrate to America, Esch becomes the recruiter of the women who are to participate in the wrestling business. In an act of metaphorical imperialism, he assembles a multinational group:

> Insbesondere bevorzugte er Mädchen fremdklingenden Namens und fremden Volksstammes, da es ja eine internationale Konkurrenz werden sollte, und bloß die Ungarinnen nahm er aus [because of his desire to "save" the Hungarian Ilona from the knife-throwing act that he regards as a threat to her]. (KW1,256)

The advertisements for the women's wrestling matches announce them as contests between the strongest women from various nations. Although some of the women do actually come from different countries, most of the names on the posters are entirely invented: the Russian winner Tatjana Leonoff, the New York champion Maud Ferguson, the winner of the Vienna Cup Mirzl Oberleitner, and the German champion Irmentraud Kroff (KW1,260). Teltscher's idea of finding a black woman to join the troupe smacks most obviously of colonialism: she is to be called

"Schwarzer Stern von Afrika," and the arrangement is to be that she will be beaten by the "Germanin" after two undecided rounds. Esch thinks of this part of the project as "diese afrikanischen Pläne" (KW1,283). He fears that Mutter Hentjen, who already regards him as a pasha in the midst of a whole herd of women (KW1,261), will be excessively troubled by this part of the plans, and indeed she is. When he makes love to her — if the act described in the novel can so be designated — she suffers from the thought that he may have come to her bed from that of a "Tschechin oder Negerin" (KW1,284). The motif of the "Negerin" also reminds us of slavery, of course, as does the "white slavery" aspect of Esch's recruitment of women from the lower strata of society. The repeated references to Czech women, as well as the Hungarian performer Ilona, remind us of that important counterpoise to German overseas colonial aspirations: eastward expansion within Europe.

In contrast to the emphasis on international competition and the scramble for international acquisitions that is metaphorically suggested by Esch's recruitment activities for the wrestling operation, his dreams of emigrating to America manifest a more peaceful aspect. In one of the reflective passages that the narrator says are too sophisticated to represent Esch's foggy mentality, colonists are imagined crossing the virgin terrain of their new country in automobiles, drawn on by inexpressible and fundamentally insatiable longings. These colonists, the narrator claims, are "nicht von jener bärbeißigen Art, mit der man Kolonisten oder Pioniere sich ausgestattet denkt"; rather, they seem to behave more like women, impelled by a longing for a new land that resembles a woman's longing for her lover (KW1,341). Yet their longing, the narrator continues, is a continual act of leave-taking (KW1,342). An earlier passage about emigrants works out a similar paradox, in which the steam ship passenger is torn between feelings of hopeful desire for a new life in the new country, and an inchoate recognition that this hope is essentially unfulfillable (KW1,253). Indeed, in the scheme developed in this novel, almost any kind of travel, including train and car travel, gives rise to mixed emotions and causes an internal rift within the experiencing subject.

We can now turn to recent theories of colonialism, notably those of Homi Bhabha. Many of Bhabha's key ideas seem to be prefigured, though often with a different twist, in *Esch.* Central for my thesis is Bhabha's contention that not only the colonized, but also the colonizer, is affected by a deep-seated sense of ambivalence toward the colonial project. The ego is split between "forms of multiple and contradictory belief"; erotic desire and will to power are not only connected, but also threatened by anxieties associated with difference. Bhabha's emphasis on

the psychodynamic aspects of colonialism, the "third space" of communication, the importance of narrative for constituting national identity, and the role of fetishism in mediating between wholeness and lack all have important counterparts in Broch's analysis of colonialism in *Esch*.

Let us look briefly at how insights about the psychology of colonialism are worked out in Broch's novel in ways that anticipate certain features of Homi Bhabha's theories. "Multiple and contradictory beliefs" are perhaps the most striking feature of Esch's character. When he visits Geyring in prison, the socialist tells him, "Du bist der alte Wirrkopf geblieben, lieber August" (KW1,327). The "bookkeeping error" that seems to Esch to have caused a rupture in the world around him manifests itself in Esch's inability to distinguish clearly between left and right politics or between the private and the public spheres. Noble concepts like honor, justice, respect, and responsibility blur in his mind with angry thoughts of murder, bizarre ideas about ritual sacrifice, and prejudices about homosexuals.[26] Brute force is for Esch a means of controlling deep-seated anxieties about cultural differences. His imagined relation to Bertrand encapsulates this paradoxical complex. Fetishism is a crucial part of his psychodynamics, manifested most clearly in his obsession with "saving" Ilona "from the knives." Many of the lengthy conversations in the novel derive their humor (for the reader) from the disconnect between Esch's assumptions and those of the other characters. The first reflective passage about emigration highlights this problem of communication through the image of the passenger who passes the telegraphist's booth on the steam liner but is incapable of imagining that the machinery is actually receiving and sending messages between sea and land. "Dann wird manchem klar," writes the narrator, "wie schütter die Menschen über die Erd- und Wasseroberfläche verstreut sind und daß es zwischen ihnen nur ganz dünne Fäden gibt, die von dem einen zum andern hinüberreichen" (KW1,252). What Homi Bhabha calls the "third space" of communication is here seen as deeply problematic. Finally, Esch's concept of his national identity is indebted to a set of narratives about other nations. The Eiffel Tower and the Statue of Liberty conjure up one kind of narrative, one that emphasizes the struggle for freedom. His mental images of Mexico and South America, on the other hand, belong to a different sort of narrative, one that hinges on a return to paradise and to "farbenprächtige Südlichkeit" (KW1,290). In both instances, Esch's fantasies about these other countries are riven by contradictions: just as the South American paradise will provide a suitable home for the loose women Esch has recruited for the wrestling venture, so American justice will also conform with his highly prejudiced views

about people different from himself. In an amusing image, the bookstore where Esch purchases the illustrated volume about America reminds him dimly of his friend Lohberg's tobacco shop: the neatly arranged rectangular shapes of the books bear a remote resemblance to rectangular cigar boxes (KW1,287). Two modes of connection with the world overseas — the travel book and the cigar — come together in an ambivalent vision that can be understood as a projection of Esch's contradictory psyche.

So much for the similarities between Broch's and Bhabha's conceptions of the colonial mentality. There is one aspect of his colonial theory for which Bhabha has been faulted, however: its failure to consider issues of gender. By contrast, gender is a crucial element in *Esch,* explored in greatest depth through the figure of Mutter Hentjen, but also through Erna, Ilona, and the troupe of women wrestlers. Mutter Hentjen's dark alcove, formerly off limits to those who frequent the pub, becomes the site of Esch's sexual encounters with her. Stepping into this taboo space is perilous, although thankfully Broch presents this motif with humor by having Mutter Hentjen store nuts on the floor of the room, a practice that gives rise to two hilarious episodes. Put into Homi Bhabha's terms, we may observe that Esch experiences in the alcove "the unhomeliness inherent in the rite of extra-territorial and cross-cultural initiation."[27] All the same, we should not forget that Broch was closely familiar with Freudian theory. There, the mystery of female sexuality is metaphorically represented by the blank space of "darkest Africa." In the dark alcove, Mutter Hentjen's bewildering lack of sexual response and Esch's subconscious colonialism come together. "Bloß ihr runder Kopf rollte wie in einem steten Verneinen auf der Decke hin und her. Die Wärme ihres geöffneten Körpers fühlend, übersteigerte er seine Lust, um die ihre erweckend zu besiegen" (KW1,286). He wants to conquer Mutter Hentjen, and sometimes he hits her in an unsuccessful attempt to provoke her into uttering a cry he could perhaps interpret as an expression of erotic response. At the same time, he imagines her as in some sense already dead. He cannot understand the fact of her widowhood. Recalling a piece of information he has gleaned from an illustrated newspaper that reflects the newly interconnected world of his time, Esch claims at one point that widows really should be burned (KW1,238). Yet, despite these — and other — violent thoughts, Esch also harbors a guilty conscience to which he cannot give conscious expression. As the narrator says in one of the reflective passages on emigration: "So haben viele der Kolonisten, selbst wenn sie heiter und gelassen scheinen, ein schlechtes Gewissen und sie sind zur Sühne bereiter als manche andere Menschen, die doch sündiger sind als sie" (KW1,342).

Ato Quayson has recently defined postcolonialism not as a state of affairs, but as a "process of postcolonializing."[28] By casting his most intricately developed study of the colonial psyche in its social, political, and economic contexts as the centerpiece of *Die Schlafwandler*, Broch ensures that his readers also attend to the problems of the colonial aftermath. The third volume of the trilogy is set in 1918. But all three volumes imply their relevance for the time of the novel's composition. Broch's trilogy understands more clearly than many works of its period the still unresolved nature of Germany's long-drawn out colonial aftermath.

Notes

[1] A direct reference to German colonial aspirations can be found, however, in the first volume of the trilogy, *1888. Pasenow oder die Romantik,* where Eduard von Bertrand discusses Carl Peters with Joachim von Pasenow (KW1,32–33). For the analysis of this aspect see Paul Michael Lützeler, "Schlafwandler am Zauberberg. Die Europa-Diskussion in Hermann Brochs und Thomas Manns Zeitromanen," in: *Thomas Mann Jahrbuch* 14 (2001): 49–62.

[2] The *Kaiserin Auguste Victoria* was the second ship to be named after the Empress. The first, with the more internationally spelled name *Augusta Victoria,* was built in 1888; the second, the *Kaiserin Auguste Victoria,* was built in 1906. See Susanne Wiborg and Klaus Wiborg, *Unser Feld ist die Welt: 150 Jahre Hapag-Lloyd* (Hamburg: *Hamburger Abendblatt,* 1997), 82–88, 149–50.

[3] Reproductions of similar Hapag posters can be found in Susanne and Klaus Wiborg, *Unser Feld ist die Welt.*

[4] Birgit Ottmüller-Wetzel, *Auswanderung über Hamburg: Die H.A.P.A.G. und die Auswanderung nach Nordamerika 1870–1914* (Berlin/Hamburg, 1986), 196.

[5] Kurt Himer, *Die Hamburg-Amerika Linie im sechsten Jahrzehnt ihrer Entwicklung 1897–1907* (Berlin: Ecksteins Biographischer Verlag, 1907), 35–36. The artist Emil Orlik supervised the printing of this book.

[6] The peak years of German emigration were 1880–1885; by 1903, the year in which *Esch* takes place, numbers of emigrants had dropped markedly. See Mack Walker, *Germany and the Emigration 1816–1885* (Cambridge: Harvard U P, 1964), chart, 176.

[7] Mack Walker (note 6), 36.

[8] Agnes Bretting and Hartmut Bickelmann, *Auswanderungsagenturen und Auswandererervereine im 19. Und 20. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1991), 74.

[9] Cit. in Bretting and Bickelmann; reference given is *Nach Amerika! Ein Volksbuch,* (Leipzig: H. Costenoble, 1855), vol. 1, 129.

[10] Bretting and Bickelmann, 203.

[11] Ottmüller-Wetzel, 197.

[12] Bretting and Bickelmann, 215–16.

[13] Published under Hilferding's pseudonym Karl Emil in *Die neue Zeit* 22:1:5 (1903/4), 134–42.

[14] *Imperializm, kak novieishii etap kapitalizma: populiarnyi ocherk* (Petrograd: "Zhizn' i znanie," 1917).

[15] Rudolf Hilferding, "Der deutsche Imperialismus und die innere Politik," in: Cora Stephan, ed., *Zwischen den Stühlen oder über die Unvereinbarkeit von Theorie und Praxis. Schriften Rudolf Hilferdings 1904 bis 1940* (Berlin: J. H. W. Dietz, 1982), 37.

[16] Ibid, 33.

[17] See F. Peter Wagner, *Rudolf Hilferding: Theory and Politics of Democratic Socialism* (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1996), 75.

[18] R. Hilferding, "Der deutsche Imperialismus," 42.

[19] I am grateful to Antony Ryan for suggesting that I explore the history surrounding Albert Ballin.

[20] Susanne Wiborg, *Albert Ballin* (Hamburg: Ellert & Richter, 2001), 64 (photograph of the Hapag-Haus) and 79 (photograph of Ballin's villa).

[21] Lamar Cecil, *Albert Ballin: Business and Politics in Imperial Germany 1888–1918* (Princeton: Princeton U P, 1967), 35–36.

[22] Susanne Wiborg, *Albert Ballin,* 52.

[23] Lamar Cecil, 35.

[24] Wiborg, *Albert Ballin,* 126.

[25] One of Ballin's recent biographers describes the Hapag director's mood during the war years as "Melancholien eines Imperialisten"; see the chapter heading in Eberhard Straub, *Albert Ballin: Der Reeder des Kaisers* (Berlin: Siedler, 2001), 215. The most detailed account of Ballin's death is given in Susanne Wiborg, *Albert Ballin,* 122–29.

[26] The homosexual theme in *Esch* recalls the notorious Eulenburg Affair, of 1907–9, in which Maximilian Harden tried to persuade Kaiser Wilhelm II that he had allowed himself to be manipulated by what Harden regarded as a homosexual clique of advisers.

[27] Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), 9.

[28] Ato Quayson, *Postcolonialism. Theory, Practice or Process*? (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000), 9.

Neither Sane nor Insane: Ernst Kretschmer's Influence on Broch's Early Novels

Gisela Brude-Firnau

I

THE VIEW OF HUMANITY IN Hermann Broch's *Schlafwandler* trilogy is, in part, the fictional equivalent of the insight that there is no definite borderline between the sane and the insane. The insane character is no more than the distorted picture of the sane character; the one is contained in the other: a porous, even fluid concept of man. Its mental stigmata are revealed to the reader almost as norms of the disfigured and damaged life.

This psychopathological twilight zone appears most clearly in two characters who may be called historical epitomes, since they not only are typical of their own epoch, but also refer to the highest decision maker of their respective periods: Joachim von Pasenow, the Prussian officer of the Wilhelmine Era, and Marius Ratti, the newcomer and village demagogue of the Hitler period. Both characters raise the question of autonomy and responsibility: when can they no longer be held accountable for their ideas, decisions, and actions? When does a character slide into the realm where the observer must take responsibility as much as, or even more than, the actor?

Broch's view that normalcy cannot be taken as a constant in the life of most individuals is based on publications by the psychiatrists Emil Kraepelin and Ernst Kretschmer. Both stress that there is no clearly ascertainable point at which the border is crossed in the development of mental disease. Kretschmer wonders what constitutes the difference between individual eccentricity (*Verschrobenheit*) and lunacy (*Wahnsystem*).[1] Although there can be no doubt in the face of full-blown symptoms, these symptoms develop in socially acceptable, almost normal forms. This seldom-discussed area, which Broch may have first come upon in Kretschmer, shall be at the center of our discussion.

Broch must have been acquainted with Ernst Kretschmer's handbook, which appeared under the title *Körperbau und Charakter: Untersuchungen zum Konstitutionsproblem und zur Lehre von den Temperamenten,* going through twenty-six editions between 1921 and 1977. On the basis of extensive research into the interplay of body structure and psychological function, Kretschmer develops a phenomenological framework of interpretation according to which every individual belongs to one of three physical types or to its variants; thus he also has latent affinities for a corresponding mental illness. The potential psychological disorder belongs to a person in the same way as his physique.

Crude as this system may appear, it is nonetheless indebted to the pioneering post-Freudian insight that psychological diseases have their basis in a biological disposition, nowadays considered to be neurochemical. Even Kretschmer himself loosened the boundaries of his typology, stressing that he only wanted to indicate certain "Denkmöglichkeiten" about how such psychophysical "Merkmalskoppelungen" might help to explore what are probably extremely complicated biological conditions (191–92).

Kretschmer abolished the traditional rigid dichotomy of the sane and the insane by including both sick and healthy people in his observations and measurements. He ascertained that the same types, with analogous psychological dispositions, could be found in both groups. Kretschmer concluded that behind the same facade there reside the same psychological driving forces, which, on the one hand, serve as finely tuned, sensible regulative energies, but, on the other, impair and destroy. Psychoses, Kretschmer maintains, are nothing but caricatures, or extreme cases, of the general constitutional types of healthy people (152).

Kretschmer's typology, considered the most influential of the twentieth century, also forges a new link between the medical and the literary discourses on disease. The treatise contains aspects which must have been convincing to an author like Broch, for whom scientific and literary questions were equally relevant: first, there was the claim to determine the relationship between physique and psyche almost according to laws, by measuring the physical proportions of healthy as well as insane people. Second, there was Kretschmer's statement that the "vollkommen künstlerische [. . .] Schulung des Auges" (7) has to precede all measurement. This means that scientific perception is ascribed to the writer's eye, to his intuitive grasp of bodily structure and inner essence.

In evidence, Kretschmer cites from literary writers' autobiographical statements as paradigms for the specific mental experiences of different types. Finally he expresses the hope that the relationship he establishes

between stature and psyche will open up new perspectives on certain esthetic, literary and historical problems (192).

It is true that, as far as can be ascertained, Broch never even mentions the names of the psychiatrists Emil Kraepelin and Ernst Kretschmer. However, he could hardly have overlooked their publications, which were considered landmarks in western medicine. In Broch's trilogy *Die Schlafwandler* (KW1) both Kraepelin's findings — which for lack of space cannot be discussed here — and Kretschmer's, in particular the latter, are creatively integrated: each of the title characters is inscribed into one of Kretschmer's three types.

II

First, there is Joachim von Pasenow, who corresponds to the asthenic character — in later editions called the leptosome. Kretschmer defines him as a lean, narrowly built man, often with wide shoulders but "brettartig flachem Brustkorb" (13, 14), who remains rather constant in his fundamental characteristics through all periods of his life. Even when grown up or in old age he shows no signs of "ordentlichem Muskel und Fettansatz" (15).

Joachim von Pasenow, by virtue of being a Prussian officer, is already fairly well defined in his asthenic image, which evokes so many associations that the text needs only a few identifiers: he appears "steif und viereckig in seinem langen Uniformrock" (KW1,156), and has inherited from his uncle not only the fair hair (KW1,22) but also the height he once hoped for (KW1;14,16). Even the sexagenarian must still be slender — true to type — since Esch manages to carry the injured major all by himself (KW1,675).

The second, the athletic type, characteristically demonstrates a well-developed skeletal and muscular structure, as well as a generally coarse bone structure. His height is above average (17–18). This type also changes little over the years.

August Esch imprints himself on the reader's mind as an athletic type with the persistence of a leitmotif: he is "hager und robust" (KW1,234), moves forward with long and energetic strides (KW1; 197, 246, 316, 364, 400), and feels his physique to be "stark, fest und wohlbestellt" (KW1; 322, 583, 585, 589). In his later years he still looks typically "hager" and "knochig" (KW1; 399, 404, 478, 492, 547, 569, 629, 677), and tirelessly rides his bicycle (KW1; 194, 225, 254, 267, 547).

Kretschmer's athletic type, who shows "bei Affekt hinter einem sonst bräunlich blassen Teint dunkle Gesichtsrötung" (52), is reflected four

times in the impetuous Esch: on his "Wangen zeigten sich rote Flecken der Erregung, verebbten in der bräunlichen Haut" (KW1,299, similarly 300,324,529).

The third type, the pyknic, is characterized by a "mittelgroße, gedrungene Figur, ein weiches breites Gesicht auf kurzem, massivem Hals." His determining feature is plumpness and a "stattlicher Fettbauch" (22). Kretschmer, himself Allemannish, points out: "Kleine untersetzte Figuren sind unter den Pyknikern unseres Volksstammes recht häufig" (24). Wilhelm Huguenau has "durchaus den Habitus eines bürgerlichen Alemannen. Beleibt und untersetzt" (KW1,385, similarly 475,567). Immediately, with the first sentences of the part of the trilogy named after him, he enters the picture as a pyknic. For this character, too, Kretschmer's morphology is fictionalized in the form of leitmotifs: "beleibt und untersetzt," as well as "rundlich," are Huguenau's characteristic features, repeated innumerable times (KW1;385,475 passim). Where the clinician speaks of "graziler Ausbildung des Bewegungsapparats" (22), Huguenau accordingly moves "leicht, fast tänzerisch" (KW1,411), and when dancing he shows "die Elastizität und Agilität eines beleibten kleinen Mannes" (KW1,567).

The corporeality of the three leading characters of *Die Schlafwandler* — the leptosome Pasenow, the athletic Esch, and the pyknic Huguenau — emerges from this intertextual dialogue. More important, their psychological disposition also agrees to a considerable degree with Kretschmer's conceptual triad. For in the three physical types Kretschmer ascertains the tendency towards two extensive areas of mental illnesses: the leptosomes as well as the athletic types are generally susceptible to schizophrenia; the pyknic types tend to manic-depressive conditions.

Kretschmer ascribes to the sane leptosomes and athletics a schizothymic — that is, a sensitive and sentimental — disposition. In the twilight zone between normalcy and disease they are schizoid; in other words, they demonstrate schizophrenic tendencies. Pasenow is a representative of this schizoid variant, caused — as the textbook describes it — by an exogenous trauma: namely, the riding accident of the ten-year-old.

Characteristic of the pyknic with slight pathological tendencies is the cycloid temperament that goes from one extreme to the other. As a healthy person, the pyknic is possessed of a cyclothymic, or mostly cheerful, mood; the usually high-spirited Huguenau is paradigmatic of this temperament.

What sort of intertextual increase in meaning results from all of this for the historical epitome Joachim von Pasenow? The splitting of Pa-

senow's world, as Karl Robert Mandelkow pointed out as early as 1962, might be described in psychopathological terms.[2] In fact, only the reading of Kraepelin's and Kretschmer's textbooks reveals how distinctly this character swings back and forth across the border between pathology and normalcy, between inherited restrictions and mental potential. As a result, the course of Joachim von Pasenow's life remains a complicated entanglement of normalcy and disease: in its external stages it reads like the biography of a Prussian aristocrat typical of the period. However, if one observes the emotional meteorology, it more closely resembles a medical case report, tracing the developmental stages of the schizoid type. Yet it is precisely in the representatives of the schizophrenic group of forms that the psychiatrist Kretschmer located the key "zu großen Teilgebieten normalen menschlichen Fühlens und Handelns" (13).

Broch confirms this: he does not develop his protagonist as a pure type. Instead, the empirical individual case appears as a "konstitutionelle Legierung" (78), combining schizoid and schizothymic traits: Pasenow has a sensitive, or even oversensitive, temperament tending to schizophrenia. Therefore Broch was able to combine clinical observations of both groups for the description of Pasenow's emotional life and social behavior, thus availing himself of a much wider gathering of material. At the same time, he laid out the etiology of the Wilhelmine period.

How much Broch appreciated Kretschmer's observations of schizoid-schizothymic types as tremendously pertinent to the years after 1888 is demonstrated by the second half of the title: "oder die Romantik"; for Kretschmer sums up his characterization of the schizothymic temperaments as "weltflüchtige Romantiker" (91). "Romantik" here refers to one's outlook on life, the tendency "zum Insichhineinleben, zur Ausbildung einer abgegrenzten Individualzone, einer inneren, wirklichkeitsfremden Traum- oder Prinzipienwelt, eines pointierten Gegensatzes zwischen Ich- und Außenwelt, zu einem gleichgültigen oder empfindsamen Sichzurückziehen von der Masse der Mitmenschen oder einem kühlen Hinwandeln unter ihnen ohne Rücksicht und inneren Rapport" (191). That this describes Pasenow's social behavior needs no further comment. The reflections on the "Romantiker" in *Huguenau* still include Kretschmer's concepts "Vereinsamung" and "flüchten" (KW1, 596–97). This is at least a peripheral complement to Broch's philosophical concept of Romanticism, which has at its center the elevation of the "Irdischen zum Absoluten" (KW1,23).

From Kretschmer's remarks on the schizoid temperaments and their variants, there emerges the image of an unemotional type of aristocrat: he always emanates "einen Hauch von aristokratischer Kühle und Di-

stanz, eine autistische Einengung des Gefühlsvermögens auf einen streng abgezirkelten Kreis von Menschen und Dingen" (116). Joachim's indifference towards the falling ill of his father (KW1,119), his lack of sympathy for Bertrand's injury (KW1,144), the coolness during the courtship of Elisabeth which amazes even him (KW1,149); all this demonstrates that his limited emotional capacity cannot even do justice to the small circle of people close to him.

In keeping with the schizoid temperament are Joachim's relations with women. Like Kretschmer's leptosome, Joachim is looking for "'das Weib,' 'das Absolute,' Weib und Religion und Kunst in einer einzigen Gestalt. Entweder Heilige oder Megäre — dazwischen gibt es nichts" (122). This constellation is reflected in Pasenow's idolization of Elisabeth (KW1;39,130,143), whom he sees as Raphael's Sistine Madonna (KW1,155). It also emerges in his later condemnation of Ruzena, who — "mit sonderbar erstarrt-boshaftem Lächeln" — appears to him as the classical image of a Megaera (KW1,141).

Joachim's *vita sexualis* suffers as well from the moral conflicts of the schizoid, in accordance with Kretschmer's diagnosis: "Hier mein Ich, meine ethische Persönlichkeit, dort der Sexualtrieb als etwas Feindliches, als ein beständig störender Fremdkörper" (76). This is sufficiently illustrated by the conflict before and during the wedding night. Security is provided only by religious ideas, for: "Viele Schizoide sind religiös. Ihre Religion neigt zum Mystisch-Transzendentalen" (122).

However, Broch's Pasenow is more than the mere fictional equivalent of Kretschmer's typology. Parallel reading also unveils his emancipatory achievements: not only is he able to distance himself temporarily from his emotional life and to resort to compensatory strategies, but he also successfully avoids being engulfed by senile depression and dementia like his father which, according to Kraepelin, are hereditary. The numerous self-referential passages — Joachim as town commandant repeats verbatim in analogous situations the utterances of his father — demonstrate his differing psychological reactions as well as tracing the extent of his development: human relations, communication and confidence keep the fateful hereditary disposition in latency. Only the final car accident ruins this psychological emancipation.

Kretschmer's typology likewise allows Broch to survey the territory of restricted ethical responsibility, the individual moral latitude for decision-making: thus the gift of money to Ruzena with which Pasenow ends the socially unsuitable liaison is not an action to be evaluated morally, but rather conforms to convention and thus to the leptosome type, oriented to social norms. In contrast, Pasenow's relationship with Esch

is not grounded solely on Christian, that is, socially formed motivation, but rather just as much on subjective moral performance, in that it contravenes all social and traditional patterns. The aristocrat, bound by convention, rises above himself and accepts the other, in his particularity, as other. The character grows beyond the "autistische Einengung des Gefühlsvermögens" diagnosed by Kretschmer (116).

This increase in meaning, which arises out of the dialogue between Kretschmer's discursive and Broch's fictional text, is therefore not only significant for the inner life of individual characters, however; it also raises questions of general relevance to the trilogy. For the correlation demonstrates that concepts and patterns of thought that are characteristic of the reflective level — fear, guilt, and sense of responsibility, as well as mystical-religious feeling — are anchored in the psychopathological area, and therefore that these concepts acquire a scientific dimension. The oft-mentioned metaphysical resonance of Broch's characters, the "Fünklein im Seelengrunde" (KW1;532,715), is to be found in individuals who are defined scientifically — down to their innermost secret stirrings — and yet always come to spontaneous, autonomously motivated decisions. Broch's characters exist in the tension between a conceptually explicable and a permanently irrational sphere: Broch's vision of humanity traces the arc from Kraepelin's and Kretschmer's psychopathology to Kierkegaard's philosophy.

It is not only the Prussian officer Pasenow, typical of his time, who is situated between sane and insane; in this same liminal area, the highest bearer of power and authority, who gave his name to the period, also moves: Pasenow's exemplar is Wilhelm II. Born in the same year, both gain lifelong security from their uniforms; both find themselves in a socially suitable marriage, more religiously than erotically based; both lose their standing and their autonomy in early November 1918.

This secret identity is particularly relevant in the psychic area: both close contemporaries and recent historians confirm that the Kaiser was subject to periodic fluctuations between normalcy and mental disturbance. This epoch, profoundly unstable even in its highest representative, found a fitting literary interpretation in Broch's work.

III

Scholarship recognizes Marius Ratti, in *Die Verzauberung* (KW3), even more decisively than Pasenow as an historical epitome, and as an analogue of Adolf Hitler. Günter Scholdt stresses, "dass der 'Verzauberung'

innerhalb der zeitgenössischen Hitler- und Faschismus-Darstellungen ein singulärer Rang zusteht."[3]

Wandering prophets whose number increased significantly during the inflation marked the sociological field within which receptivity to Hitler arose. In Broch's novel, Ratti embodies both: as a wandering prophet he seizes upon and activates social potential both subliminal and characteristic of the era; as a "guest-worker" he is Hitler's portrait in miniature. The wandering demagogue is a highly synthetic historical epitome. Paul Michael Lützeler concludes his description of the reception of *Die Verzauberung* with a heartfelt groan about the "vertrackte Netzwerk der so abgründigen wie weitreichenden Brochschen Beziehungssysteme";[4] and it is almost necessary to ignore his meticulously documented report of all the hitherto established connections in order to trace yet another strand. Yet Kretschmer's intertextual presence simply cannot be disregarded, for it is Kretschmer who provides the psychopathological model of such "Prophetentypen" (121) and even, in part, the linguistic raw material for the construction of Broch's character.

In *Körperbau und Charakter* wanderers who desire to change the world for the better — a conspicuous phenomenon of the early 1920s[5] — are categorized as falling among the schizoid, and thus clearly schizophrenic, forms. Kretschmer claims that "diese Sonderlinge und Querköpfe" can be seen "sektenstiftend und langhaarig für Menschheitsideale, Rohkost, Gymnastik, Mazdaznan oder Zukunftsreligion, oder für alles zusammen predigend" (121). Ratti, with his vague nature-mysticism, belongs to this group; like Pasenow he figures, as a lanky leptosome, among the strongly schizoid types and appears as a "Grenzfall" between the sane and insane. Kretschmer diagnoses in them a frequent form of schizophrenic fits of temper, related to "hirntraumatischen und epileptischen Syndromen" (127). Similarly the narrator observes Ratti in a kind of epileptic seizure: "dann stürzte er steif wie ein Stock in den Getreidehaufen [. . .]. So blieb er liegen und rührte sich nicht mehr" (KW3,214). When Kretschmer describes a striking characteristic of the wandering prophets as "Eleganz und Verwahrlosung, beides sehr auffallend und betont" (KW3,122), Broch's character appears "leicht, lässig, unrasiert" (KW3;278,279,340) reacting "mit einer kleinen eleganten Geste" (KW3;341,279).

Kretschmer further emphasizes "die bekannte, karikiert vornehme Gespreiztheit in Sprache und Bewegungsmanier" (122), which Broch's narrator observes as Ratti's "noble Redeweise [. . .] mit priesterlichem Tonfall [. . .] ein so hochtrabendes Gewäsch" (KW3,211); he also notes that Ratti moves: "beschwingten stolzen Schrittes und ein wenig lat-

schend" (KW3,348). As negative characteristics of the schizoid wandering preachers, Kretschmer lists — among other things — "schroffer und kalter Egoismus, pharisäische Selbstgefälligkeit und maßlos überreiztes Selbstgefühl" (123). The arrogant Ratti reflects these qualities throughout the three versions of the novel.

The incapacity for emotional involvement, Kretschmer writes, results in "Züge von aktiver Gemütlosigkeit jeder Art . . . von zynischem Egoismus, von despotischem Eigensinn . . . endlich auch von brutalen und kriminellen Instinkten" (129). This is evidenced not least by numerous "geschichtlich berühmte zäsarische Despoten" (127), and Kretschmer refers to the political consequences should such tendencies ever be realized "in einem absolutistisch regierten Staat in Wirklichkeit" (130). The clinician thus reflects the reciprocal effect between the schizoid individual and the public sphere which becomes the very precondition for Ratti's "Machtergreifung," his interventionist exertion of influence and the incitement to discrimination, violence, and murder.

And yet the crucial difference between Broch's fictive character and the historical model should not be ignored: the lack of emotion, of venomous hateful rhetoric. Ratti's "unpolemische Kühle"[6] can best be explained by means of Kretschmer's typology. For the schizoid with autistic tendencies — "Ungesellig, still, zurückhaltend [bis zur] schneidend brutalen, aktiven Menschenfeindschaft" (119) — is lacking the requisite emotional potential. Broch's depiction of Marius thus remains tied to the medical diagnosis. The author is more concerned with creating a model, transcendental representation than with topical, individualized precision.

This relation of *Die Verzauberung* to Kretschmer's textbook goes well beyond the character of the wanderer: in its intertextuality it lays charges against the narrator, the village doctor. For the contemporary psychopathological concepts and linguistic descriptions testify to the doctor's medical knowledge: he recognizes the typological unpredictability of the immigrant, diagnoses his "Psychose," even learns of his intent to commit murder — and warns nobody. More consistently than the retrospective confessions, his knowledge as illustrated by his language accuses him of passive complicity.

Responsibility is based on insight: insight into good and evil, into one's own competence. On the basis of Kretschmer's typology, both historical epitomes, the Wilhelminian Pasenow and the Hitlerian Ratti, display psychopathological compulsions. But both, indeed, can distinguish right from wrong; both, however, and Ratti in particular, are limited in their capacity to feel responsible. In both characters, Broch the

philosopher and metaphysician makes a limited concession to the scientific age.

Notes

[1] Ernst Kretschmer, *Körperbau und Charakter: Untersuchungen zum Konstitutionsproblem und zur Lehre von den Temperamenten* (Berlin: Springer, 1921) 112. Citations hereafter will be indicated in the text as (Kre.). Emil Kraepelin, *Psychiatrie. Ein Lehrbuch für Studierende und Aerzte.* 5th edition (Leipzig: Bart, 1896). Kraepelin's pioneering definitions and classifications of depressive disorders remain partially valid down to the present. See E. C. Johnstone, "Affective Disorders," in *Disorders of Neurohumoural Transmission,* ed. T. J. Crow (London, New York etc.: Academic Press 1982) 246. More recently Sander L. Gilman states that almost every human being considers the possibility of someday falling mentally ill. See S. G., *Disease and Representation: Images of Illness from Madness to AIDS* (Ithaca and London: Cornell UP, 1988) 9. See also Thomas Anz, *Gesund oder krank? Medizin, Moral und Ästhetik in der deutschen Gegenwartsliteratur* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1989).

[2] Karl Robert Mandelkow, *Hermann Brochs Romantrilogie "Die Schlafwandler": Gestaltung und Reflexion im modernen deutschen Roman* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1962) 70.

[3] Günter Scholdt, *Autoren über Hitler. Deutschsprachige Schriftsteller 1919–1945 und ihr Bild vom "Führer"* (Bonn: Bouvier: 1993) 879. See also *Brochs Verzauberung,* ed. by Paul Michael Lützeler (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1983).

[4] Paul Michael Lützeler, "Die Verzauberung: Intention und Rezeption," in: P. M. L., *Die Entropie des Menschen. Studien zum Werk Hermann Brochs* (Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 2000), 67.

[5] Ulrich Linse, *Barfüßige Propheten. Erlöser der zwanziger Jahre* (Berlin: Siedler, 1983).

[6] Scholdt, 879.

Non-Contemporaneity of the Contemporaneous: Broch's Novel *Die Verzauberung*

Gisela Roethke

I

HERMANN BROCH'S NOVEL *Die Verzauberung* is frequently interpreted as an antifascist work and many critics highlight its political dimensions. My purpose in this article is to reemphasize the religious dimensions of the novel. However, although other critics either see the mystical level of the novel as promising a new religiosity or reject Broch's mysticism as too easily confused with Nazi ideology, I will consider a different aspect of the religious dimensions of the novel. In my view, Broch's plan of a trilogy of novels centered on the portrayal of religious experience using the concept of the "Ungleichzeitigkeit des Gleichzeitigen," a concept developed by Ernst Bloch in his work *Erbschaft dieser Zeit* (1935).[1] A number of figures and rituals described in the novel represent certain historical stages of European religious developments; Broch's purpose was to demonstrate genuine stages of religious beliefs and practices in the past and their contemporary ineffectiveness in juxtaposition to the pseudoreligious demagoguery of a protofascist figure such as Marius Ratti. While preparing for the work on *Die Verzauberung,* Broch wrote to his publisher Daniel Brody on October 19, 1934, answering his own question whether literature in his time still satisfied a social need:

> Antwort: Ja. Und zwar ist es in einer Zeit, die nicht und schon längst nicht mehr zu "glauben" und zu philosophieren, d.h. religiös zu denken vermag, deren tiefstes Bedürfnis jedoch nach Glauben-können geht und die jedes Surrogat dafür nimmt, ist es in und für eine solche Zeit von äußerster Notwendigkeit, daß man ihr die Möglichkeit des Glaubensaktes, die Entwicklung des Supranaturalen aus dem irrationalen Seelengrund beispielhaft an wirklichen Menschen vor Augen führe. Das ergibt natürlich weder "katholische," noch "protestantische," noch

> "jüdische" Dichtung, sondern ist im Gegenteil von jedweder, also auch von jeder Glaubensdogmatik frei. (KW13/1,300)

Scholars analyzing Broch's novel are confronted with the complex history of this novel, the fact that all versions except for the so-called first one remained incomplete, and that Broch himself never published the work, since he died during work on the third version in 1951. Much has been written about the various versions, the numerous working titles, and the publication history. In 2000 Paul Michael Lützeler gave a detailed overview of the history of the writing, publication, and reception of this novel in his new book on Broch.[2] The working edition *Die Verzauberung* was first published in 1976, twenty-five years after Broch's death. The editor, again Lützeler, dates Broch's writing of this version between July 12, 1935 and January 16, 1936.[3] Most scholars use this working edition for their analyses, as it represents the first and only version of the novel completed by Broch himself in 1936.

I want to reiterate here Thomas Quinn's cautionary note at the Yale Symposium in 1986 in which he stated that it is important not to apply much later theoretical works by Broch to help interpret levels of meaning in this first version of the novel.[4] The use of Broch's study of mass psychology from the 1940s particularly prejudices understanding *Die Verzauberung* in an anachronistic way, namely as a primarily political novel. While Broch was intensely interested in and focused on political questions from the middle of 1936 on, during the years of the first conception and the first two extant versions of *Die Verzauberung* from about 1933 to the middle of 1936, he was collecting and studying books on myth, religion, philosophy, and psychology. In fact, his newly found interest in political activism in 1936 was at least one of the reasons for his abandoning the project of a religious trilogy of which *Die Verzauberung* represents just the first part. His readings of the years between 1933 and 1936 can be partially reconstructed through his correspondence, through the accessibility of parts of his Vienna library,[5] and through his various literary and philosophical essays in those years. When one takes his readings, correspondence, and publications of that time span into consideration, it becomes clear that Broch's main concern during those years was how to counteract the "Wertzerfall" that he had posited in the theoretical framework of his trilogy *Die Schlafwandler* and in a number of essays.

In a letter to Brody dated January 16, 1936, as he was completing the first version of the novel, Broch wrote:

> Ich habe den Eindruck, daß es wirklich der erste *religiöse* Roman werden wird, nämlich einer, wo das Religiöse nicht im Gottesstreitertum

> usw. liegt, sondern im Nacherleben. Soweit es den Erd- und Mutterkult betrifft, glaube ich, daß der erste Band richtig angesetzt ist. (KW13/1,385/86).

At the time he considered calling the whole trilogy "Demeter." Everything suggests that the religious level of the novel was more important to him than the antifascist one; the connection was that he saw the reestablishing of a religious value system as a necessary step in combating fascism.

This letter did not reveal some new turn in Broch's thinking. On October 19, 1934, in the important letter on myth quoted above, Broch had written to Brody: "Die Welt ist für vielerlei Esoterisches reif, weil das Esoterische, Religiöse, Mythische in der Seele eines jeden Menschen webt und lebt und auch gefühlt wird" (KW13/1,300). The new task of literature was for him the portrayal of a "religious totality." Broch's view on this matter is evident from his earliest to his latest essays and in his letters, too. It was the reason for his turn away from the philosophy of the Vienna Circle to literary production. Unfortunately, Broch's theory of values from the 1920s is not available, but he called it "eine komplette Religionsphilosophie" (KW13/1, 350). Especially in the years 1932 to 1934, and then again at the end of the Second World War, there was a plethora of statements in his essays and letters about the need for a new *organon* of values, a new cosmogony, a new religiosity which would find their first utopian expressions in myth. However, he gradually lost hope that such a myth could be created in a literary way. In spring 1936, as he was working on revising *Die Verzauberung* in its second version, Broch wrote to Stefan Zweig, "daß es für den erkennenden und schreibenden Menschen eigentlich nur mehr zwei Themen gibt: das Politische und das Religiöse. Und da das zweite beinahe unzugänglich ist, noch unzugänglich, kraft unserer verschütteten Religiosität, so tritt das Politische immer mehr in den Vordergrund" (KW13/1,399).

For some time my interest in *Die Verzauberung* has been focused on the figure of Mother Gisson who has been identified as a Demeter figure or sometimes also as a "Great Mother" figure. This figure serves as a point of contention between various interpreters. Fifteen years ago at the previous Yale Broch Symposium, Lützeler argued that the Demeter figure was too weighted down with multiple tasks: a symbiosis of Greek antiquity and rural Christianity, the utopia of a new religion, and the representation of matriarchy versus patriarchy.[6] Other critics point out that the narrative perspective of the country doctor casts doubt on how the Mother Gisson figure should be viewed, since the country doctor is

not a reliable narrator, but one who is himself subject to some of the fatal attractions of mythical and mystical thinking, and in whose behavior there is a pattern of rejection of modernity and turning back to nature. He is not immune to the lure of nature mysticism, and not even to that of a mass psychosis. The doctor himself is a figure in search of a new ethics to anchor his life in something different than the nihilism of modern city life. He has made his escape from modernity to a rural life, where he has gone back to the much older practices of a country general physician in contrast to his former life as a specialist in a city clinic. At that same conference, Judith Ryan response to Lützeler's paper views the Mutter Gisson figure as more than a little bit suspect:

> The novel teeters dangerously on the brink of giving us, in Mother Gisson, a positive model whose actual shortcomings are constantly blurred by the narrator's rhapsodic language. [. . .] Mother Gisson's "wisdom" remains too close for comfort to Nazi nature mythology.[7]

The unease with which the Mother Gisson figure has been viewed continues. A number of critics wonder about the strange passivity and ineffectiveness of Mother Gisson.[8] I argue that the error lies in reading the novel primarily as a political allegory rather than as a religious novel. Mother Gisson's ineffectiveness might better be explained in the context of the originally planned religious trilogy of which this novel was supposed to be only the first part. A number of interpretations of this novel point to the correspondence of the Mother Gisson and Irmgard figures with the Demeter and Persephone myth. This myth was the centerpiece of the orphic mysteries that were one of the prevalent religious cults in large parts of the world of Greek and Roman antiquity until the rise of Christianity. In my view Broch intended the Mother Gisson figure to represent a stage of religious life that had vanished in modern industrialized societies. This stage may have had the valid power of forming a social community in its time, that is in antiquity and in agrarian societies. Therefore Mother Gisson, the Demeter figure, was portrayed positively by the country doctor in the context of the village life of the novel. However, Orphic mysticism historically was suppressed by Christianity and did not survive into modern times. It was clear to Broch that its utopian potential did not have the power to counteract the murderous beliefs of the fascists of the village, even though he did not let his narrator keep this critical distance. This dichotomy between the views of the author and the narrator explains the mixed reception that the Mother Gisson figure has received.

II

It was Broch's critical distance to the Demeter figure that led me to see the connection to Bloch's concept of "die Ungleichzeitigkeit des Gleichzeitigen" as expounded in his book *Erbschaft dieser Zeit*. Bloch meant this concept to refer to unfulfilled utopian potential in the values of social groups that were marginalized by historical progress. While Bloch's social philosophy was based on historical materialism, and he thus applied his theory of the "non-contemporaneity of the contemporaneous" to the utopian potential of economic struggles of conflicting social classes, Broch gave this concept — without ever expressly quoting it in these words — a different turn by applying it to religious utopias as they had been developed during different stages of the history of European religious civilization. The significant divide between the two thinkers is that Bloch approached social problems as a materialist and Broch approached them as a Platonist. Bloch believed in a Marxist revolution as the solution to the problems of the masses, and Broch believed in a new, religiously grounded ethical system for the same purpose.

The connection between Broch and Bloch has been noted before. Richard Faber compares Bloch's essayistic volume *Erbschaft dieser Zeit* and Broch's novel *Die Verzauberung,* even though he never establishes whether Broch had actually read Bloch, and even though he treats the two authors rather separately with a predominant emphasis on Broch's work.[9] Faber sees Bloch and Broch thinking and writing independently, reacting as contemporaries to phenomena of their time in similar, yet also very different ways. He juxtaposes their works, coming down heavily in favor of Bloch and criticizing Broch, even going so far as to placing his novel into all too close proximity to Nazi ideology. However, Faber never deals with Bloch's concept of the "non-contemporaneity of the contemporaneous."

Indeed, Broch *had* read Bloch's *Erbschaft dieser Zeit*. As his correspondence reveals, he read it within a short time of its publication in early 1935, in immediate proximity to the actual start of his writing *Die Verzauberung*. In my estimation, Broch's reading of Bloch's text had a seminal influence on the development of the novel's characters and the portrayal of the social structures within the mountain village. Broch had been agonizing over the form for his material for quite some time, until finally, on January 23, 1935, he was able to report to Brody:

> Nun ist die Sache so [. . .], daß in den letzten Tagen der seit zwei Jahren projektierte Roman [. . .] plötzlich vom Stapel gegangen ist. Mit einem Male war die richtige Form vorhanden."[10]

This is a curious formulation. Broch gives no further indication of *how* this "right form" presented itself. As a kiss of the Muse? As an inspiration under great duress, since two days later, he was going to move his domicile from Baden to Laxenburg? Or maybe under the impression of reading someone else's book?

On the same day he wrote Brody he also wrote to Ruth Norden, an editor with his later American publisher Alfred Knopf, who among other things had apparently asked him for recommendations on German religious and philosophical book titles that might be worth translating into English for the American book market. After having recommended Theodor Haecker's books in this letter, Broch stated overly modestly that in general he read far too little (KW13/1, 333). About three weeks later, on February 16, he sent a further letter to Norden, saying: "Jetzt habe ich das neue Buch von Ernst Bloch *Erbschaft dieser Zeit* (Oprecht, Zürich) gelesen, eine durchaus amüsante, durchaus geistreiche Kritik dieser Zeit vom marxistischen Standpunkt aus" (KW13/1, 333). He called Bloch's work an "außerordentlich lebendiges Buch." These attributes given to the book represent high praise from Broch indeed, even though in his value system the referral to a "Marxist point of view" put a damper on this praise.

When reading Broch's *Die Verzauberung* and Bloch's *Erbschaft dieser Zeit* in conjunction with each other, the intertextual relations are striking. I see a relationship between the two not only as contemporary thinkers, but I also believe that Broch directly adapted some of Bloch's analyses of the socio-political situation of their time. This reception was a complex process, which happened mostly at the realistic level of the novel. Broch borrowed some of Bloch's class-specific political analyses and incorporated them in characters located within these particular class situations.

Since my focus is on the religious level of the novel, I will here only briefly summarize some of the parallels that one can find on the realistic social level between *Erbschaft dieser Zeit* and *Die Verzauberung*. Most important, Bloch pointed out the susceptibility of physicians to Nazi ideology in his 1933 essay "Mythos Deutschland und die ärztlichen Mächte" (59–69). This seems surprising at first, since doctors usually are not named in one breath with the lower middle class and with rural populations as having been especially susceptible to Nazi ideas. Bloch saw physicians as the "social scientists" of the Nazis, with their theories of genetics, selective breeding, racism, and the "national pathos of blood" (62–63). He located German medicine quite centrally as having been co-opted by Nazi ideology and having made itself its handmaiden.

In light of Bloch's elaboration, it is at least interesting to note that Broch chose a physician as his unreliable narrator, with whom the reader has difficulties determining which side he is on.

Other issues similar in Broch's approach which Bloch had raised in his volume of essays were the susceptibility of rural populations to a *pastorale militans,* paramilitary organizations spawned by ancient forces (43). He also diagnosed the "kleinbürgerliche Reaktion" of the forces of "Heimat" and "Volkheit" which formed a reaction against the modern city whose major exponent was Berlin. Bloch located this reaction specifically in Austria and Bavaria with their earth and soil cults. And he even mentioned Demeter in this context: "Wo immer Bachofen patriarchalische Verhältnisse und Erdkulte malt, färbt Liebe zum schweizerischen 'Mutterland' mit; selbst Dionysos steht ihm der Demeter näher als dem Wein" (44/45). And according to Bloch, it had been particularly difficult to Christianize pagan rural populations. Indeed, even more directly he stated that the pagan god Pan was still influential in opposition to the *homo spiritualis* as well as to the *homo faber*. The sobriety of modern atheism had — according to him — been more successful in driving out Christianity than driving out the myth of the soil. And these chthonic forces rose to fight against mechanization (46). In this fight the desperate masses of peasants and lower middle class employees, merchants, and craftsmen even used animal masks "wie sonst nur berauschte Bauern in der bayrisch-österreichischen 'Rauhnacht'" (47). Violence was stoked in the lower classes with such events as butchers' dances and the roughest kind of folklore (52). Differently from most of his Marxist colleagues, Bloch did see that strict Marxism didn't fulfill the hunger for the irrational, religious yearnings of mankind (58–59). These examples shall suffice here to show how closely Broch modeled his social forces active in the village after Bloch's analysis.

III

It is on the Platonic level of the novel — and this means for Broch the more important religious level — that Broch adopted Bloch's seminal concept of the "non-contemporaneity of the contemporaneous." In my estimation, *Die Verzauberung* portrays a number of different religions still holding sway in rudimentary forms in the religious life of the village at that time, from the blood sacrificial ritual of the Celtic rite performed at the "Kalten Stein" by Marius Ratti, the proto-Nazi demagogue, via the Orphic mystery cult of Demeter and Persephone in the figures of Mother Gisson, Irmgard, and Agathe, via the partially still pagan rituals

of the "Steinsegen" performed by the sickly local Catholic priest, to the Calvinist ethics of the victim Wetchy. I argue that Broch's purpose in his projected trilogy of religious novels was to portray the psychological dimensions of religiosity through the ages as an ingrained human need to anchor ethics in an absolute sphere. And I speculate — against all *caveats* — that the trilogy would have taken religious developments some steps further, possibly in the second volume, into the nihilism of modern city life, and in the third volume to the kind of mysticism that Broch later portrayed in the Virgil figure in *Der Tod des Vergil.* and in the beekeeper figure in *Die Schuldlosen*. On January 16, 1936 after the completion of the first version of the first volume of the trilogy, Broch wrote to Brody:

> Am liebsten möchte ich jetzt gleich den dritten Teil angehen, weil der der schwerste ist. Über den zweiten Band bin ich mir ziemlich klar; der ist auch verhältnismäßig rational und sehr deskriptiv, also Dinge, die mir leicht fallen. Aber vor dem großen Schluß fürchte ich mich. (KW13/1,386)

Throughout the novel, Broch oscillates between the realistic, historical level on the one hand, and the Platonic level, which is the level of ahistorical knowledge, on the other. In this bipartite structure, the Platonic level contains those passages in the novel, in which a number of the characters including Mother Gisson, Agathe, the village priest, Wetchy, the Doctor, and also Marius Ratti slip into poetic expressions. These serve to express their individual understanding of an ethical imperative based on absolute ideals. Such absolute ideals — according to Broch — are anchored in the depths of the individual soul in its epistemological meaning. Some critics severely judge such textual passages as a kind of irrationalism that supposedly brings Broch close to the irrationalism of the Nazis or, at the very least, makes him "suspect of helpless Anti-Fascism."[11] This is an unfortunate misunderstanding of Broch's method and intent, the method being a rational reduction of the location of ethical absolutes within the individual sense of ethics, and the intent being a new ordering of society along a central common value system. That ambition characterizes Broch as a thinker grounded within modernity, and it does not set him that much apart from a socialist thinker like Bloch, who also grounded his philosophy in a unitary system.

In this context, Broch wrote in a letter to Brody on June 27, 1935 about *Die Verzauberung:* "Sicher ist nur, daß es tiefer noch als die *Schlafwandler* in die Ur-Erinnerung und in die Ur-Sphäre dringen wird, und daß darin das liegt, was man dichterische Entwicklung nennt."[12] But he

was also acutely aware that this ultimately religious approach to ordering the world could only be alluded to in literature, but not brought about through it. So, the most that could be expected was a utopian reflection of the potential for a new order within the individual literary character.

In Mother Gisson, I see Broch portraying a figure of archaic dimensions who represented a metaphysics of nature, a knowledge of cycles of birth, death, and rebirth, as it had been appropriate for an agrarian society of the past. Such a religious view was fully valid in its own time, the time of the Homeric mythic creation of the Greek pantheon of gods, up to the height of Athenian civilization, and to the dawning of Christianity, since despite the developments in the *polis*, ancient Greek society was primarily agrarian; however, this ancient religion could not possibly present an effective counterweight to a modern mass psychosis as expressed in the various fascisms in reaction to modernity. Still, this archaic religion functions positively, even though in a weakened form, in the Mother Gisson figure in this novel, in that it provides possible positive forms of religious ecstasy to her and her successor Agathe. The reason is that both she and Agathe are fully anchored in the traditions of an old agrarian society that — in its essentials — may not have substantially changed from ancient Greek society.

In contrast, the demagogue Ratti only uses archaic religious forms for his own power purposes, and it is for that reason that Mother Gisson refuses to impart her secret knowledge to him. Like the Nazis, Ratti uses pre-Christian myths to forge the insecure masses into a chauvinistic community. He uses whatever he can find in already existing local myths and twists it to his own purposes. Just as the Nazi ideologue Alfred Rosenberg[13] was conversant with a broad knowledge of ancient myths which he perverted for anti-clerical, anti-democratic, anti-emancipatory, and racist purposes, Ratti appropriates local lore and myths to forge the village inhabitants into a new community of followers under his leadership. Since the village population has no firm, binding beliefs to counteract this demagoguery, they follow him blindly in their insecurity caused by modernity. They follow him all the way to the ritual murder of a virgin, which he has given the guise of a "sacrifice" to "sanctify" his cause.

In this novel Broch suggests that none of the great traditional organized religions could still point the way to a more humane and at the same time modern future. Their utopian potential had been exhausted. The Catholic Church is portrayed as powerless in the figure of the weak and timid village priest, just as it was indeed weak and timid as an institution in the face of fascism. However, Broch was not ready to give up on the remnants of utopian potential within this historical form of relig-

ion. The pitiable village priest is not the only representative figure for Christianity in this novel.

If one reads the novel under the religious rather than the political aspect, two figures become more important who otherwise appeared to be only secondary figures: the miserable, weak Wetchy, the insurance agent, and the simple-minded pregnant Agathe. In the political interpretations of this novel, Wetchy is equated with the Jewish victim of the scapegoat motif. Although that may also be true at that level of the novel, Broch stresses his firm holding on to Christian religiosity, which causes Wetchy to become the only — however miserable — "hero" of the novel. There is a scene at the end of the book in which the weak, apparently so insignificant and fearful Wetchy confronts Ratti after he has been bullied and tormented by the paramilitarily organized youth of the village. In this scene, Wetchy gains true human stature. The scene happens late in the book, as the tortured Wetchy leaves the village with his family, fleeing from the brutality of the villagers to the city. Ratti shows up to insult Wetchy one last time (KW3,340–47). He takes off on one of his political tirades on blood and soil, city and village, earth and mountain myths. To just give a brief excerpt:

> Die neue Zeit hat begonnen, die Gemeinschaft der Männer hat sich wieder erhoben, ihr ist das Land untertan, weil es die Gemeinschaft der Erde ist, und die Städte werden verdorren in neidischer Habsucht, versöhnt die Erde, von der wir das Gezücht wegtilgen, versöhnt der Himmel, der sich wieder herabbeugen wird zur neuen Reinheit der Welt, wenn die Erdlosen, die Gottlosen verschwunden sein werden. (KW3,343)

This tone is only too familiar to those who are informed about the Nazi period. With a crash, Wetchy throws down the pile of dishes which he is carrying, a new courage awakens in him, and he confronts Ratti with a confession of his own deepest beliefs. Hesitatingly, stuttering and stammering and stopped by moments of utter speechlessness, his credo of simple humanity, of the plain completion of one's duty as a human being in the knowledge of the invisible God comes forth tortuously. It is Wetchy, the fearful and yet so courageous Wetchy, who recognizes Ratti's character correctly and who analyzes the fear behind Ratti's *macho* behavior:

> Er spricht von Mut, aber in Wirklichkeit hat er Angst, ja, Angst, er fürchtet sich, fürchtet sich vor dem Unsichtbaren, weil das Unsichtbare ihm das Unrecht verbieten würde, und lieber sucht er den Tod, als daß er unseren Herrgott suchte. (KW3,346)

And in the end Wetchy attains the knowledge of a truth which he initially is not able to express, but for which he finally finds the mystical Platonic expression of "das Ewige in der Seele" (KW3,346).

The mystically elevated death scene of Mother Gisson in the forest follows immediately on this scene with Wetchy. After portraying her ecstatic expressions of the abolition of time, the abolition of all limitations, the abolition of the power of death, the narrator returns to his epilogue. At the very end, he describes the simple every-day-life of the young girl Agathe and her child, and it seems to him

> als ob mit dem Kind der Agathe eher die neue Zeit kommen wird als mit den Reden des Marius [. . .], als ob sich in Agathens Geist die neue Frömmigkeit vorbereitet, die die Welt braucht und die sie will, und daß Agathens Kind dies einst wird verwirklichen können. (KW3,369/70)

The direct sequencing of these three final episodes of the novel is significant: the confrontation of Wetchy with Marius Ratti, the death of Mother Gisson steeped in mystical rites, and finally the prophetic preview into the future with the utopian hope which the country doctor attaches to Agathe's child. In my view, Broch's structuring of the end of the novel by concentrating on these three figures hides a palimpsest of the originally conceived structure of the whole religious trilogy that he was planning: Mother Gisson's mystical matriarchal cult as a religious stage of the past; Wetchy's urban patriarchal religion as a valuable remnant of Christianity in the present, a Christianity that could only stand up against barbarity in individual cases, but not as an ethic moving a whole society; and finally in the figures of Agathe and her child the hope for a religious renewal from the simplest roots.

Even though many a critic has taken the Agathe-with-child-ending as simplistic and even *kitschig,* it still was exactly this plain simplicity in which Broch saw the new piety, the possibility to shape a new ethical community. A similar image closes the end of *Der Tod des Vergil* with the mother-child-image as a prophetic vision of the new religious beginning with Christianity. Broch expressed this view in a letter to Frank Thiess in 1934:

> Aber wahrscheinlich ist es das schlichteste, einfältigste, kleinste Leben, dem wir zustreben müssen: eine "Zernichtung" im Ekkehartschen Herzensgrund, eine Reduktion (. . .) auf ein Nichts, das nur mehr dem Individuellen angehört und doch den Keim zu neuer Soziabilität in sich trägt, weil jene Einfalt und Einfachheit auch die Liebe ist. (KW13/1,307–8)

Here he names the "earthly absolute" which otherwise usually appears in abstract form in his theoretical works. There is a clear line of development from *Die Verzauberung,* the book and trilogy never completed during Broch's life-time, to Broch's later works in which Broch took up the basic thoughts again: a line of development from the Demeter cult to pre-Christianity in *Der Tod des Vergil* to the abstract mysticism of the modern mystical beliefs of the beekeeper in *Die Schuldlosen*. In *Die Verzauberung,* Broch attempted to portray these different levels of religiosity in the "non-contemporaneity of the contemporaneous" in a number of figures within the first novel of his projected trilogy and potentially within the plan for the whole trilogy.

Notes

[1] Ernst Bloch, *Erbschaft dieser Zeit* (Zurich: Oprecht & Helbling, 1935). Henceforth cited in text.

[2] Paul Michael Lützeler, "Die Verzauberung: Intention und Rezeption," in *Die Entropie des Menschen: Studien zum Werk Hermann Brochs* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2000), 45–71. Lützeler's article also contains a selected bibliography of the secondary literature on this work.

[3] Lützeler, "Die Verzauberung: Intention und Rezeption," 47.

[4] Thomas Quinn, "'Dialektik der Verzauberung': Mystification, Enlightenment, *The Spell,*" in *Hermann Broch: Literature, Philosophy, Politics — The Yale Broch Symposium 1986,* edited by Stephen D. Dowden (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1988), 117.

[5] Klaus Amann and Helmut Grote, *Die Wiener Bibliothek Hermann Brochs — Kommentiertes Verzeichnis des rekonstruierten Bestandes* (Vienna, Cologne: Böhlau, 1990).

[6] Paul Michael Lützeler, "The Avant-Garde in Crisis," in *Hermann Broch — Literature, Philosophy, Politics,* 20–21.

[7] Judith Ryan "The Self-Destructing Message: A Response to Paul Michael Lützeler," in *Hermann Broch — Literature, Philosophy, Politics.* 38.

[8] Lützeler provides a comprehensive survey of research concerning the "religions- und mythologiegeschichtlichen Aspekte," in *Entropie* (see note 2), 56–62.

[9] Richard Faber, *Erbschaft dieser Zeit. Zu Ernst Bloch und Hermann Broch* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1989).

[10] *Hermann Broch — Daniel Brody. Briefwechsel 1930–1951,* ed. by Bertold Hack and Marietta Kleiß (Frankfurt am Main: Buchhändler-Vereinigung, 1971).

[11] Richard Faber, (see endnote 9), 118.

[12] *Hermann Broch — Daniel Brody* (see endnote 10).

[13] Alfred Rosenberg, *Der Mythus des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Munich: Hoheneichen, 1930).

"Great Theater" and "Soap Bubbles": Broch the Dramatist

Roberto Rizzo

I

HERMANN BROCH'S PLAYS WERE first published by Paul Michael Lützeler in his *Kommentierte Werkausgabe* (KW7) and more recently in Italy.[1] Readers and even scholars of German literature and those who have studied the great Viennese writer will, in my opinion, certainly be surprised by the tragedy *Die Entsühnung* (1932), the comedy *Aus der Luft gegriffen oder die Geschäfte des Baron Laborde* (1934) and the "Schwank mit Musik" *Es bleibt alles beim Alten* (1934). The reason for such a reaction is quite simply that nobody, apart from a few specialists in this particular field, had previously known that Broch, along with his so-called "major" works, *Die Schlafwandler* (1931–32), *Die Unbekannte Größe* (1933), *Die Verzauberung* (1935, published 1969), *Der Tod des Vergil* (1945), *Die Schuldlosen* (1950), short stories and literary, philosophical, political and sociological essays, had also elaborated his own original theory of drama and between 1932 and 1934 had carried out from this particular position a "minor" activity as a dramatist and critic of the society of his time.

From June to September 1932 Broch rented a house in Schachen, a small hamlet near Gößl on the Grundlsee in the Austrian Salzkammergut. It was a rather simple wooden hut without electricity and with quite inadequate heating. The owners were Franz and Therese Gaiswinkler, a married couple from the area. Gößl is a little, godforsaken mountain village, totally isolated from the rest of the world. However, it is not very far from Altaussee, which despite the all too frequent summer showers, is surrounded by a charming, alpine landscape. Here, in the course of previous decades, famous writers and musicians, such as Franz Grillparzer, Nikolaus Lenau, Adalbert Stifter, Hermann Bahr, Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Arthur Schnitzler, Jakob Wassermann (whom Broch visited at the time in his house in Altaussee), Leopold von Andrian, Fritz von Herzmanovsky-Orlando, Rainer Maria Rilke, Johannes Brahms, Richard

Strauss and Gustav Mahler had sought refuge and found inspiration. In these two months Broch also met his friends there, and these occasional encounters interrupted the solitude that the author of *Die Schlafwandler* had long desired and which he desperately needed. These friends were: Jolanda Jacobi, a psychologist who was one of Karl Bühler's pupils and later one of Carl Gustav Jung's closest collaborators, Robert Neumann, a Viennese author who would become Honorary President of the Austrian Pen-Club, young Friedrich Torberg and the well-known photographer Trude Geiringer, whom we must thank for the best portraits of Broch in the thirties. Just over the road, opposite the Gaiswinklers' house, Anna Herzog took up residence in the same period. It was in her villa in Sievering and in her apartment in the Liechtensteinstraße in Vienna that much of the trilogy was written and was diligently typed by her. In the writer's heart she had by then for some years taken the place of Ea von Allesch. In a letter of July 17 Broch wrote to Willa and Edwin Muir, the English translators of *Die Schlafwandler,* that he had come to Gößl especially to work in tranquility and that Brody was pressing him for a new book (KW13/1,197).

The work referred to in this letter is the *Filsmann*-Roman. The original plan goes back to the spring of 1930 but had not been developed any further while writing the trilogy proceeded. (The third volume, *1918. Hugenau oder die Sachlichkeit,* was published in April 1932.). His intention was to give a concise, yet exhaustive and detailed description of German society at the time, much in the same fashion as John Dos Passos, whom he greatly admired, had represented the simultaneous multiplicity of various New York lives in *Manhattan Transfer* (1925) and the degeneration of the "American Dream" in *The 42nd Parallel* (1930). The idea was finally abandoned by the author for good at the end of the same year and only fragments of it remain. (KW6,287–325) The reason was that he was uncertain about whether to continue in the vein of the literary avant-garde and experimentation with the polyhistorical novel or rather to avail himself of more traditional narrative forms. Another reason was that he was becoming increasingly anxious about the worsening political situation in Germany and about his own financial state. Broch referred to these very problems on his return to Vienna, when he informed his friend Daisy Brody, his publisher's wife, about his work and preoccupations: "Ein paar Kapitel des Romans stehen immerhin schon.[. . .] Dichten heißt, Erkenntnis durch die Form gewinnen wollen, und neue Erkenntnis kann nur durch neue Form geschöpft werden" (KW13/1,222f.).

The theme of the *Filsmann*-Roman would continue, however, to appeal very much to the author even during his solitary stay in Gößl, despite an almost daily dreary task of dealing with an overwhelming correspondence, which was not only of a personal nature, as he complained to Brody in letters of July 16 and 19. Broch did not take the theme up again for a narrative prose text. Rather, following the method and technique of the above-mentioned American model, he reelaborated the idea in a dramatic form that would finally become the play *Die Totenklage*. It was only at the end of November that the work was given its final title, which today is better known as *Die Entsühnung*. Broch was in a fruitful period for his work and on August 6 wrote to his publisher: "Das Drama läuft in einem Tempo, daß es nicht unterbrochen werden darf" (KW13/1,204). But two days later, on August 8, Brody replied with veiled irony that it would be irresponsible on his part to disturb the flux of such a creative work.[2] Then, on August 8, his friends, the Muirs in St. Andrews, Scotland, were also informed about the preparation of his new work: "Vielleicht wird es ein Haupttreffer, und ich kann zur Première nach London kommen. Voraussetzung natürlich: daß das Stück von Willa und Edwin Muir übersetzt werde!" (KW13/1,210)[3] At the same time, Alban Berg, his former school friend at the K. K. Staats-Realschule in Vienna who was already famous as the composer of *Wozzeck* (1926), received a brief note on August 27 saying that his work would certainly be ready in the autumn. (KW13/1,211) On the same day, Broch first informed Brody that the play was practically completed and only required a few finishing touches. (KW13/1,212) He had not yet decided, however, whether the play should be included in the *Filsmann*-Roman project, or whether it would be preferable to publish it separately so that it might be produced as soon as possible, as we can read in the same letter to the publisher asking for his advice. Brody did not reply immediately and only in January 1933 did he write to the author to tell him that he was in favor of the latter solution (BBB, 248).

II

There is no doubt that Broch was well aware during the early stages of *Die Entsühnung,* a "Drama, mit dem ich mich sehr geplagt habe" (KW13/1,216), of having written not, as Koebner maintained, the distillation of a bigger fragment of a non-existent novel,[4] that is to say of the *Filsmann*-Roman, but, as Broch rightly believed, an important, highly artistic text worthy of being considered, along with *1918. Hugenau oder die Sachlichkeit,* one of his best works (BBB, 224). As the

author states in the "Theoretische Vorbemerkungen zur *Entsühnung,*" it was intended to give a cross-section of the industrial society in Germany around 1930 (KW7,405), in the Naturalist style. It is the description of the able, but not exactly limpid, maneuvers of an unscrupulous entrepreneur, the commercial adviser Albert Menck, to make two medium-sized companies, belonging to the Filsmann and Durig families, enter into competition with each other in order that he might incorporate them to the great advantage of his own group. 1930 is the year of the serious economic crisis, crucial to German history, with its growing unemployment, wage-cuts, workers' and Trade Unions' struggles, the bankruptcy of firms, widespread dismissals, the electoral success of the KPD and NSDAP, drastic tax increases and emergency decrees on the part of Kanzler Brüning. Thus the owner's son, young Herbert Filsmann, in order to save the firm, finds himself forced to fight on three fronts: against the workers, who do not accept the wage-cuts and dismissals and hence provoke a popular uprising; he has to defend, unsuccessfully, his own goods from Durig who cunningly sells his own goods underprice; finally, he wants to keep the ownership of his factories intact. In this way, he turns out to be a nineteenth-century type of capitalist, incapable of understanding the modern age because he does not want to be incorporated into a group where his leading role would be much weakened (which is, in fact, what actually happens). Young Filsmann does not have the strength to bear this cruel series of defeats and commits suicide. This is exactly what happened to Felix Wolf, Broch's boyhood friend, who committed suicide at the same time as Broch was writing the tragedy, when the firm of which he was managing-director went bankrupt. Wolf, in 1927, had taken over the textile factory in Teesdorf from Broch; his wife, Martha, who always wanted to be the center of attraction in the high society of the capital, would serve as a model for Gladys. The factories that had belonged to Wolf had passed into the hands of other important entrepreneurs, while the one in Teesdorf had been bought by the industrialist Otto Anninger, on whom the dramatist based the figure of Menck. In the elderly Friedrich Johann Filsmann, head of the dynasty, one can recognize certain aspects of the writer's own authoritarian father, Josef Broch; Thea von Woltau may recall the author's cousin, Alice Schmutzer, a writer who did not publish her works; finally, the idealistic philosopher, Viktor Hassel, expresses the same ideas as Broch: ". . . vielleicht wird die Erneuerung von den Frauen ausgehen. . . . erst der, der die Einsamkeit der Erkenntnis auf sich genommen hat und solchen Weg zu Ende gegangen ist, wird sich die Welt erarbeitet haben" (KW7,182).[5] In his representation of the setting of the

work, therefore, Broch availed himself of his long experience in industry and in the world of work in general, and of his knowledge of the people and secret mechanisms, so he based his play, to a large extent, on what he had more or less personally witnessed. On the side of the owners, there are all the monopolists and great entrepreneurs, the technocrats who are merely concerned with the perfect efficiency of their factories, the small industrialists who seek salvation in the fusion with larger holdings and cartels and, finally, directors of joint-stock companies and administrators, who are awaiting the "strong" right-wing man, the charismatic leader who will ensure the State the ideal conditions for an advantageous market economy. But the other side, the world of workers, left-wing intellectuals, white-collar workers and representatives of workers' organizations, such as communists, social-democrats or Christian and nationalist trade-unionists, is equally varied and restless.

Koebner has distinguished three main "models" of reference in this play: the *Königsdrama* (the fate of industrial and financial magnates, who come to the fore but are then crushed by the harsh social conflicts of the time), the *Oratorium* (in which a world tragically governed by virile power is judged) and the Expressionist stylization of the *Klage,* a lamentation about the insoluble conflict between pure idealism and the pragmatism of the *Realpolitik*.[6] However, one preliminary observation that is required when analyzing it is that all or nearly all of the characters are forced to reason and react, as a consequence, within a system of *partial values*. Menck, for example, the prototype of the modern manager who identifies himself completely with the industrial group he runs, is the classic, cynical *Berufsmensch,* whose only moral law, the logic of the *business man,* demands: "die wirtschaftlichen Mittel mit äußerster Konsequenz und Absolutheit auszunutzen und, unter Vernichtung aller Konkurrenz, dem eigenen Wirtschaftsobjekt, sei es nun ein Geschäft, eine Fabrik, ein Konzern oder sonst irgendein ökonomischer Körper, zur alleinigen Domination zu verhelfen" (KW1,495–96). Unlike young Filsmann, who represents the logic of the *Herrenmoral* and family-run capitalism and who is still so strongly conditioned by feelings and impossible dreams that he finally succumbs, Menck is consciously a prisoner of the logic of a highly efficient economy aiming to conquer the market; he is also willing in politics to come to any compromise that will support him in the repression of workers and rebel trade-unionists. It is sufficient to mention a few fragments of dialogue and some isolated opinions which, picked out here and there in the play, are particularly significant in this regard: "Ist es auch, Graf Sagdorff. Ein diabolisches Gewerbe, das unsereins da betreiben muß" (KW7,144. "Zynisch gesprochen, verteidi-

ge ich bloß meinen Arbeitsplatz" (KW7,145). "Machen wir uns nichts vor, es ist so. Und wir sind durchaus keine Kämpfer, die gegeneinander auftreten, sondern einfach Marionetten, die etwas agieren, was man Wirtschaft nennt." (KW7,165) The "Marionetten" are a specific reference to the historical fatalism of Georg Büchner, who uses the same term in *Dantons Tod*. Further, he says to Frau Filsmann: "Die Dinge sind stärker als die Menschen" (KW7,202).

The trade union secretary Lauck, editor of a left-wing newspaper, the *Arbeiterwillen,* on the other hand, can be compared with his visionary fanaticism to the martyr and protagonist of the spontaneous-anarchic "Passions- und Revolutionsdrama" *Judas* (1921) by Erich Mühsam. He is the perfect embodiment of a political logic that oscillates between the fatalistic acceptance of universal guilt and the fideistic certainty of a human rebirth. At the same time, the military attitude of Baron Eugen von Roßhaupt, the soldier in the Baltic *Freikorps* who hates modern society, capitalism, the world of finance and money and who firmly believes with his idealistic drive in the prospect of a national restoration, only too clearly reveals a *revolutionary* logic that is, however, also the aggressive, brutal logic of pure *anarchic violence,* by which he was inevitably to be one of the first to be crushed. As for the traveling salesman Jeckel and the managing-director of the Filsmann factories, Hügli, the former is a figure characteristic of the literature of the period and might well have been taken from the realistic chronicles in certain novels by Hans Fallada, for example *Bauern, Bonzen und Bomben* (1931) or *Kleiner Mann, was nun?* (1932). He has become a totally unscrupulous man, without any ethics and reasons according to the same commercial way of thinking as the cynical businessman Hugenau with his odious treatment of Frau Esch at the end of the novel. He frequents prostitutes in squalid hotel rooms and is not ashamed, being the true knave that he is, to blackmail Roßhaupt for his love-affair with Gladys, justifying his actions by saying that money rules the world and those who don't run after money only die of hunger. The latter, on the other hand, has built up his career as a rationalist technician and portrays the attitudes typical of an entrepreneur. He is tied to the fate of the factory he loves as if it were his own creation and therefore disapproves of the policy of the wage-cuts the board of directors has decided on. At the same time he is obliged to carry out wide-scale dismissals, thus impoverishing those very workers who will rise up against him during the lock-out, killing his son in the cradle. In this way the child, being the most obvious symbol of innocence and purity, becomes the victim of a horrifying destructive process, involving all the characters in the tragedy, with the exception of the fe-

males in the Epilogue, making them all guilty and denying them any hope of salvation.

It can, therefore, be said that *Die Entsühnung* is to be included, for *Zeitgeist,* theme and structure, in the tradition of the so-called *Wirtschafts- und Industriedramen* of the Neue Sachlichkeit, as proposed, for example, by Georg Kaiser's *Gas* trilogy (1917–1920), by Ernst Toller's *Hoppla, wir leben* (1927) or Lion Feuchtwanger's *Die Petroleuminseln* (1927).[7] Yet Broch's work is different, as shall be seen, in the originality of the theory on which he based his courageous and innovatory stylistic-theatrical experiment. In this *Zeitstück* the author faced the specific problems of the great crisis in Germany and was very successful, as Schürer clearly wrote, in putting on stage the extremely complicated mechanism of modern capitalistic economics.[8] However, Broch was not only fully acquainted with contemporary drama (among which Ödön von Horváth's *Italienische Nacht,* itself a popular antifascist play set in 1930, like *Die Entsühnung,* in a city in southern Germany); he also read the *Industrieromane* then in vogue, such as Willi Bredel's *Maschinenfabrik N & K* (1930) and in particular Erik Reger's *Union der festen Hand* (1931), which in many critics' opinion[9] was fundamental to the choice of theme for Broch's own play. The author himself defined it, in a letter to Willa and Edwin Muir on February 7, 1933, as a "Buch von Format," urging his friends to translate it into English. (KW13/1,232)[10] Reger's novel won the Kleist award in the same year as its publication, following Zuckmayer's recommendation. Like Broch's play, and with characters that are in many ways similar, it also deals with the development of German industry in the Ruhr area and faces problems and feelings that are widely discussed, such as the measures taken to rationalize industrial takeovers and strategies, the politics of the trade unions and the role of factory councils, the press in the Weimar Republic, party struggles, the spread of National Socialism, illegal financing, violence, resignation and pain.[11]

To return to his original dramatic theory and the innovative experimentation in style and staging proposed by the author in this work: it was Broch himself, in the aforementioned letter to the Muirs of October 12, 1932, who referred to the play as a "stilistisches und artistisches Experiment," which could be "ein großer Erfolg [auf der Bühne] [. . .], denn es erscheint mir nicht nur irgendwie 'großes Theater,' sondern auch als ein Ansatz zu jenem neuen Stil, der unbedingt gefunden werden muß, wenn das Theater überhaupt weiter bestehen soll. (. . .) Ich bin nun überzeugt, daß die Ziele des Theaters nach wie vor in der griechischen Abstraktheit liegen, daß aber der Nährboden, in dem allein es

ruht, immer nur im Naturalistischen zu sehen ist. Diese Verbindung zwischen Naturalismus und Abstraktismus habe ich gesucht." (KW13/1,216)[12] He further wrote to the writer and friend Egon Vietta, whom he already greatly admired thanks to his very perceptive criticism of *Die Schlafwandler:* "Was ich suchte (. . .) war die Darstellung des Metaphysischen in seinem Durchbruch aus dem Alltag (und damit Naturalistischen), überzeugt, daß dieser Vorgang nicht nur das stärkste Element der Bühne, sondern der Kunst überhaupt ist" (KW13/1,278).[13] Yet it is in the "Theoretische Vorbemerkungen zur *Entsühnung*" that the author explains his ideas more clearly and expresses his wishes to experiment with possible new forms, in order to proceed along the path of knowledge and define the task of the play. Like the polyhistorical novel, it must represent and recuperate the *totality of the world* which the "disintegration of values" in its present state, with its perverse web of positivism, of rationality and of presumed scientific progress, seems to have, but has not yet quite, definitively destroyed. "Der Weg vom Göttlichen zum Irdischen" Broch posited, "ist nicht mehr zu gehen. Die Umwertung der Renaissance hat auch dem Theater den Weg gewiesen, den es fortan zu gehen hatte: vom Irdischen zum Göttlichen, vom Naturalistischen zum Gedanken" (KW7,405).[14]

Returning to the divine in the theater, therefore, basically means for Broch returning to man and his reality, since "das Publikum besteht aus Menschen, eingespannt zwischen Geburt und Tod, und die Problematik des Menschen ist unwandelbar. [. . .] Das Problem des heutigen Menschen ist Not: das Humane und damit auch das Metaphysische seines Daseins bedrängt ihn in Gestalt des Wirtschaftlichen und Sozialen" (KW7,404). It would be possible for the Austrian dramatist to renew the theater only if the way could be found "zum 'großen Theater,' zum Theater der großen humanen Probleme" which is represented "auf jener Ebene [. . .], die man die *sophokleische Schicht* nennen dürfte (my italics) [. . .] Wenn es also eine Erneuerung des Theaters geben soll, so muß wieder der Weg gefunden werden, der auf naturalistischer Basis errichtet, dennoch zum *Stildrama* führt. (. . .) Die *Entsühnung* versucht diesen Weg zu gehen" (my italics) (KW7,404f.). The originality of Broch's concept corresponds exactly to the function of the lyrical element in the novel as a means of expressing the irrational and transcendent on the stage, as Durzak pointed out,[15] of a concrete, historical situation.

What Broch meant exactly by his reference to the great Greek dramatist has not yet been fully clarified by critics, the one exception being Doppler who, however, restricts himself to pointing it out and stating that a play may be defined as Sophoclean when "the protagonist

does not understand the meaning of suffering but still accepts events as God's will."[16] In this he is of the same opinion as the famous classical philologist Albin Lesky, thus interpreting the *sophokleische Schicht* in a theological, rather than theoretical and literary sense. Doppler's view is correct, but it seems to me that the admiration Broch felt for Sophocles derives from the fact that there is no known work by this dramatist that does not forcefully propose the question of ethics, embodied by his characters, and he places man, just as Broch hopes for in his theory, in the very center of all, weaving his tragedies around conflicting duties and disputes about behavior. Sophocles believes in the importance of man and his greatness, so his convictions lead him to depict heroes who do not succumb in the face of any difficulty, not even when they are rejected by those around them or when the gods seem to taunt them. The importance of human deeds is no longer magnified by consequences that go beyond them, but derives, on the contrary, from the attention paid to their causes and the way they are carried out. The tragic in Sophocles is closely linked to the human ideal his heroes respect, which is why, in my opinion, he is closer to us than Aeschylus. Another aspect of Sophocles that must have appealed to Broch was the fact that the old idea of morality was reconsidered in the light of reason and that the characters in his epics reflect a new world, confronting problems unknown in the legends and raising man, with all his fragility and in all the instability in worldly matters, to become the sole judge of his duty. The weakness of man and his impotence are, however, at the same time underlined and are interwoven with the irony of fate. At the very moment when he feels secure, misfortune suddenly occurs and when he wants to act for the best, he finds himself in a trap and causes a disaster. Man is completely in the dark. He is a blind man playing a game of chance, in circumstances that are nearly always destined to fail (it is sufficient to think of the sudden, unforeseeable, tragic death of Hügli's son, the victim of workers' violence, in *Die Entsühnung*). Sophocles lacks Aeschylus' great, vital enthusiasm and prophetically religious surge, but he does not yet know Euripides, with his cold, intellectual passion and rational inclination. What Broch also certainly appreciated in his plays was the lucid awareness of human unhappiness and the sense of the dignity of suffering, along with his clear, rational analysis and the perception of the inscrutable forces that escape it. In Sophocles, even the heroes' despair maintains its lofty nobility, which permits them to triumph at the very moment in which they succumb. There are no other tragedies in which we can see so many unjustly condemned and so many innocents annihilated. No other drama expresses such physical and moral suffering. Yet no other

drama revolves so firmly around the mingling of such a gloomy philosophy with such an intense, warm and serene faith in man and in a love for life.

The "Sophoclean stratum" Broch theorized for his play (and for his theatrical works in general), the culminating moment when metaphysical dimension, lyrical monologue, problematic reflection and ethics transcend the merely economic and social reality, is attained, however, only in the two scenes of the Epilogue. Schürer refers to Broch as a "neusachlicher Dramatiker wider Willen," cleverly playing on the earlier and more famous definition of Broch proposed by his friend Hannah Arendt ("Dichter wider Willen") in the preface to *Dichten und Erkennen* of 1955. The author opposes to the violent, guilty and destructive world of men, represented symbolically in the meeting of the board of directors of the Filsmann factories, the positive, redeeming world of the three mothers and the six young women who mourn for their dead in the *Totenklage*. The scene is staged as a chorus in Greek tragedy and out of their sorrowful experience they try to reestablish the disrupted order of the universe by invoking a utopia.[17]

Immediately after he had concluded his play, Broch tried to find a publisher for it and a theater that might produce it. It was not, however, to be very easy, as he himself realized right at the outset. On this occasion, Brody with his Rhein-Verlag could offer him no concrete help but only, given his lack of experience in this field, promises of taking an interest in it, advice, letters to his contacts and, now and then, a few ironic jokes about the chance of earning much money with its performance (BBB, 232). Hence, Broch decided first to turn to Stefan Zweig, whom he went to visit twice in his beautiful home on the Kapuzinerberg in Salzburg. He discussed at length with him the play's approach and received some valuable suggestions. "Zweig hat außerordentlich gescheite Dinge zum Stück gesagt, und ich muß es umarbeiten" (BBB, 228), we can read in a letter Broch sent to Daisy Brody from Salzburg on October 13, 1932. In another, sent to his publisher from Vienna a week later, he says: ". . . Zweig verlangt [, daß] . . . die anonyme Maschine der Männergesellschaft und ihr nicht aufzuhaltender Leerlauf [. . .] in schärfere Kontrastierung zur Frauenklage gesetzt [werde.] (. . .) Um dies noch krasser zu machen, schlägt Zweig vor, das Sanierungswerk der Filsmannwerke völlig ins Anonyme zu führen, d. h. hier die Sanierung durch Staatshilfe zu bewerkstelligen. Dies ist [. . .] der Haupteinwand Zweigs" (BBB, 229). However, Broch did not conceal his perplexity and ended up by accepting only very few of the modifications that he had been advised to make (KW13/1, 218).

Although not very enthusiastically, Brody sounded out various publishers in his friend's favor, writing to those who might be interested in publishing *Die Entsühnung:* to Marton, Pfeffer, Bonnier, S. Fischer, Little Brown, Kennedy & Livingston, Secker, Arcadia-Verlag, Drei Masken-Verlag and to the most famous directors who could have produced it, such as Otto Falckenberg, Gustav Hartung, Max Reinhardt and Charles Blake Cochran. For his part, Zweig recommended the work to Felix Blochs Erben-Verlag. But all these efforts were to no avail, leading the author to confide, by this time in resignation, his disappointment and bitterness first of all to his translators and then to Brody: "Der Zustand des deutschen Theaters ist schauderhaft" (KW13/1,220). "Ich werde nie wieder ein Stück schreiben" (BBB, 234). "Wie die Dinge heute liegen, ist beim deutschen Theater gar nichts zu machen, am wenigsten mit einem Stück von politischem Parfum. Da heißt es abwarten" (BBB, 260).[18] Thus there was nothing left for Broch to do but take the fate of his play into his own hands, foregoing Brody's and Zweig's generous offer to mediate. He must have undertaken this task with great determination and considerable commercial skill, since *Die Entsühnung* was not only accepted as early as February 1933 by the theatrical sector of the Paul Zsolnay Verlag, which paid him a thousand shillings in advance, but was also produced a year later, on March 15, 1934, at the Zurich Schauspielhaus, thanks to the decisive assistance of Ernst and Emmy Ferand (his friends who were later to give him hospitality in the Laxenburg castle near Vienna). The director, who was instrumental in the "große Theatererfolg," as Broch himself put it (KW13/1,282), with the spectators and critics of the première, was Gustav Hartung, former director of the Hessisches Landestheater in Darmstadt, who had fled Nazi Germany in 1933 and had had the courage, on recognizing the worth of the play, to have faith in an author who, while being undoubtedly famous throughout Europe for his *Schlafwandler* trilogy, was as yet completely unknown as a playwright.

Hartung, however, did not accept the connection between naturalism and abstractionism as theorized by Broch in his tragedy, which is particularly evident in the transition from the realistic atmosphere of the board of directors' meeting to the mystic-expressionist style of the funeral chant of the women. He therefore removed from the polygraphic copies of the text the author's publishers had placed at his disposal not only the most "lyrical" scenes but also the entire Epilogue. Thus *Die Entsühnung* was adapted to the taste of Neue Sachlichkeit typical of the time and, moreover, given an unfortunate new title taken from the Gospel according to Luke (23, 34), "[. . .] *denn sie wissen nicht, was sie tun.*"

Broch protested in vain at this arbitrary mutilation,[19] "weil ja der Epilog das Wesentliche an dem ganzen Stück ist" (KW13/1,284). Unfortunately, the script used by the director no longer exists, so we cannot reconstruct the details of the cuts that Broch complained about. There still remains the curious fact, however, that after the first performances in Zurich on March 15, 17 and 21, 1934, despite the above-mentioned favorable reception they encountered, there were to be no further performances, either at the Schauspielhaus or in any other theater in Switzerland, Austria or Germany. Several years were to pass before Ernst Schönwiese produced a radio-version in 1961, broadcast on the tenth anniversary of the author's death. Schönwiese felt he was authorized to produce its *Hörspielfassung,* which, by the way, was very well received by the audience, because he appreciated the importance and the essential function that Broch, who considered the radio the most suitable means for producing it and was also clearly influenced by the similar audio-visual experiments (in the field of music and films) of Piscator's political theater, had attributed to the *Tonintroduktionen*.[20] He also felt the need to use, to its fullest advantage, the capacity of the radio to compress the epic wideness of the play.[21] He, therefore, eliminated the classical subdivision of the original text into three acts and, just as arbitrarily, cut, shortened, changed and shifted certain scenes, including the Epilogue; by means of equally drastic cuts he also reduced the number of the *dramatis personae* from the original thirty in the Zurich première to twenty-one in his *Hörspiel,* eliminating characters such as Sagdorff and Hügli, who are not exactly of minor importance.

In more recent times, *Die Entsühnung* has been staged only twice: the first performance was in 1982 at the Städtische Bühnen Osnabrück, entitled *In großer Zeit,* as suggested by the author's son in ironic analogy of Kraus's well-known essay of 1914, and directed by Goswin Moniac; the second was in 1994, once more at the Zurich Schauspielhaus, exactly sixty years after Gustav Hartung's production, staged by Daniel Karasek and based not on the *Bühnenfassung,* but on the *Buchfassung* of the play, which was, quite rightly, considered to be more impressive for the mise-en-scène. Both performances, it must be recognized, were equally valid, while being very different from each other in their overall outlook and in the theatrical and stylistic choices made accordingly. Moniac, on the one hand, kept the women's funeral chant but he had it recited as a prologue at the beginning of the play, eliminating all the elements of pathos and declamation. He also chose, while respecting the lyrical passages dear to Broch, a highly realistic, technical and functional scenography, built entirely on tubular steel scaffoldings, in this way reproposing

a modern variation of the *Industriedrama* of the Neue Sachlichkeit. Karasek, on the other hand, kept the original title of the work and abolished, as Hartung had done earlier, the Epilogue but he did not manage to prevent his interpretation of the text from adopting a melodramatic tone, something which irritated the critics immensely, and some characters from seeming to represent simply the author's ideas, since their behavior could not be developed coherently from a psychological point of view.

III

If we are to give credit to a curious statement by Broch's son, Hermann Friedrich (or Armand, as most people, including his father, called him), reported by Durzak,[22] Broch is said to have once confessed, after concluding the play and at the same time being ironical about its tragic epilogue, that it was perhaps time to propose another work for the theater in which, however, the dead (or aspiring suicides, as may be) should not appear only at the end but rather right at the outset, in the first scene. He carried this project out in a very short time: this comedy, "eine Überbrückungsarbeit, welche rascher Geld bringt" (KW13/1,286), as the author playfully defined it, was the highly original and very pleasant *Aus der Luft gegriffen oder die Geschäfte des Baron Laborde,* which turned out to be an almost perfect parody of *Die Entsühnung* or, to use Lützeler's words, a true "satirisches Gegenstück zur Tragödie"[23] in which the humor and irony of the best Austrian light theater enchantingly replace the dark, accusatory pathos of the previous play.

The comedy was written as the "Schwank mit Musik" *Es bleibt alles beim Alten* from May to July, 1934, in the villa Anna Herzog had rented in Sievering. It was never published or produced in the author's lifetime. Broch did indeed offer his play both to the Paul Zsolnay Verlag and to the S. Fischer Verlag, besides a few famous theaters in Vienna such as the Burgtheater, the Volkstheater and the Theater in der Josefstadt, but none of these approaches, much to his disappointment, were welcomed. Otto Preminger, the young director of the last theater named, even justified his quite obviously unfair rejection by saying that it was "zu kalt und zu literarisch" (BBB, 344). In actual fact, Broch, who was only too severe a judge of his own works, was well aware that his comedy was "sehr gut" (KW13/1,294) and "als geglückt zu bezeichnen" (BBB, 344), although he was obviously embittered and hurt by such off-putting attitudes. It was, needless to say, merely a "minor" form of drama compared to the theater dealing with the "great human problems" that he

had theorized for *Die Entsühnung,* that is to say a text written to earn a living ("Brotarbeit"), a light type of literature apparently foreign to him ("Operettengenre"). Yet it is equally true that an author of his class would never have undertaken such a difficult, dangerous and experimental task had he not been quite certain, on the one hand, that he was in possession of a "hervorragendes Instrument zur Erlernung dramatischer Technik" and, on the other, that he had managed "auch in diesem Operettengenre etwas (schwach) Neues zusammenzubringen" (KW 13/1,293f.).[24] Unfortunately, it was only about fifty years later that critics and the public were easily convinced of the quality of the work, when the German première was held on October 6, 1981, at the Städtische Bühnen Osnabrück, directed by Peter Lüdi, and then on the occasion of the quite delightful Austrian première on June 25, 1983, at the Viennese Akademietheater, directed by Fred Berndt. The latter performance was preceded by an equally well-applauded dramatized version of *Die Erzählung der Magd Zerline,* taken from the novel *Die Schuldlosen* (1950) and proposed as a monologue for the famous actress Hilde Krahl by Berndt himself.

There is, however, another aspect connected to the origin of the play that is worthy of particular attention, before analyzing its theme, for its unusual implications. We are referring to Broch's comprehensible, yet pathetic, attempts as a father to credit his son with a genuine, original literary talent and to make other people believe that he had contributed autonomously and significantly to the play. "Ich darf nicht mehr damit rechnen [. . .], daß ich [. . .] meinen Sohn (der ja wirklich entscheidende Ideen beigesteuert hat) so rasch in die dramatische Laufbahn werde werfen können," the above-mentioned letter from Broch to Brody of October 19, 1934, says. And in another letter to Konrad Maril, the person in charge of the theatrical sector of the S. Fischer Verlag, on November 25 of the same year: "Es ist sicherlich präzise, reinliche Theaterarbeit von sehr gutem Niveau, und ich habe den Eindruck, daß bei meinem Sohn eine immerhin einiges versprechende Begabung zu Tage getreten ist. (. . .) Ob ich beim Eintritt in die Öffentlichkeit das Stück mitzeichne oder ob nicht überhaupt ein Pseudonym gewählt werden sollte, möchte ich mir noch vorbehalten" (KW13/1,321f.). On the typescript of the comedy, Broch did indeed indicate the authors as "Hermann Broch père und Hermann Broch fils," but it was only in 1951, after his father's death, that the son, after deciding to offer the text to a director for staging or even for a film version,[25] eliminated this indication and substituted it with the pseudonym "Vergil Bertrand," which was, in any case, only too easy to identify. In truth, the assistance he gave

to the writing of the text was of only slight importance and purely occasional, which is proved not only by his letters to Marion Canby on October 14, 1951, to Ruth Norden on November 4, 1951, and to Gottfried Reinhardt on July 29, 1952, but also by the equally important one he wrote several years later, on January 27, 1966, to Manfred Durzak, who was then a Germanist at the Indiana University in Bloomington and was about to publish some extracts from the comedy in the Austrian review *Literatur und Kritik,* in which the phases of this "collaboration" are chronologically reconstructed quite precisely:

> My father came and visited me in Paris in the spring of 1931 and together we saw an eccentric work at the theater (Bourdet? Anouilh? I can not remember it) in which all the protagonists in the last act commit suicide. I then suggested a play in which all the characters kill themselves immediately in the first act and that is how in an hour that same night the Prologue to *Baron Laborde* was born. This Prologue was left to slumber in a drawer without any changes for the next two or three years. In 1933 (or perhaps in 1934) my father met Reinhardt (in Berlin, I think) and the latter invited him to write a play for Oskar Karlweis and the Theater in der Josephstadt. My father (. . .) began to take time, saying that it was not to his liking, that he didn't have a suitable theme, etc. etc., until I reminded him about of that Prologue which was ready but which had been forgotten about. So the *Baron Laborde* was written in just two weeks and it is certain that more than three quarters of the work came from my father's pen. (. . .) In 1934 *Die Entsühnung* was performed in Zurich, *The Sleepwalkers* had already ensured my father's fame in German literature and from that moment on he no longer considered it opportune to lend his name to such *"soap bubbles"* ('Seifenblasen,' but Broch also used other terms such as *opera minimissima, Witzchen,* literary jokes and *Unterhaltungs-Schreibereien,* pure and simple *divertissements*) as he was accustomed to define both the comedy and the farce.[26]

While judging the comedy to be nothing more than a simple literary joke below his dignity as a writer, Broch secretly continued to love its basic idea even during his exile in America, so much so that, as his son testifies, he even had it read once at Princeton by Brecht himself.[27] The idea was to show very briefly that reality exists solely thanks to the dynamic, at the same time dynamicizing, intrusions of unreality and that conformists can continue to live thanks entirely to the occasional appearance among them of an exceptional anti-conformist, of a man who stands outside bourgeois morality and society, that is to say an outsider, an adventurer. And Baron André Laborde, the protagonist of the play, is certainly nothing if not an adventurer. He is, it is true, a thief, a forger of checks, a speculator on

the Stock Exchange and an expert swindler, a "Hochstapler" who knows only too well all the secrets and tricks of international finance, but he is also undoubtedly an "artist" of trickery, a refined "philosopher," a charming, intelligent and very pleasant *grand seigneur* who will leave a very positive and agreeable impression of himself on his departure. On his part, Broch certainly did not have to look too far for a model on which to base this character. As Lützeler reminds us, his son Armand, like Laborde, loved luxury and the good life and acted very much in the same way when working as a tourist guide in Greece for a rather unstable Viennese travel agency. The agency would in fact soon go bankrupt, but Armand managed to stay on all the same, without paying his bill, for several months at the Hotel Grande Bretagne in Athens by boasting about all the important friends he had and about his sound financial situation. He thus tricked the tolerant and generous manager, just as the Baron does in the comedy.[28] But obviously the work is not merely the portrait, or parody, of a "difficult" son. It is also, first and foremost, the play of a great humorist in modern German literature, as Horst defined him.[29] In it the author satirically lays bare the degenerative mechanisms of economic reality, after having led them to their extreme consequences, and at the same time points out the unusual, bizarre and amusing side of this triumphant *Partialwertsystem,* to use Broch's own term. He knows perfectly well how to use the means of comic representation (the idea of five contemporary suicide attempts in the prologue is, in this sense, quite exemplary) and attains an extraordinary scenic effect in the witty use of dialogue.

Who, then, is Laborde, this figure "mit mythischen Zügen"[30] who goes from place to place like a new Hermes, endowed with craftiness and eloquence, who is literally adored by bankers and salesmen? He is someone who has such a precise awareness of his profession that he can confess in the opening monologue: "Oh, das Leben des Hochstaplers ist voller ethischer Skrupel (. . .). Nur wer den Mut zur Unwirklichkeit besitzt, ahnt die Unendlichkeit" (KW7,244f.). In my opinion, Laborde is first of all *also* the author himself, who once confessed to his friend Frank Thiess, in offering him help to solve some problems that had arisen with a publisher, he possessed a technique in negotiating that he used twenty years long following the example of all tricksters, brigands and blackmailers from the Balkan countries;[31] like him, he is very well acquainted with all the sophisticated potentiality of the economic and financial world, manages quite easily to replace the commercial relationship between demand and supply with that of cause and effect and reduces, to save Seidler's bank from bankruptcy, the logic of business *ad*

absurdum, which explains the title of the comedy *Aus der Luft gegriffen:* "Das Öl muß verkauft werden . . . wenn es einmal verkauft ist, wird es auch fließen. [. . .] Das ist ein Naturgesetz" (KW7,278). Yet Laborde, the trickster, who shares with Broch the same generosity, the same success with the female sex and the same need for his personal freedom, is also the only realist in the midst of actors and dupes (he objects to Agnes, a victim of her upbringing and of her father's profession, that money is really only a mere abstract, KW7,242f.). He is, paradoxically, the only honest person who does not accept the conventions and rules of the game in a bourgeois society which is only superficially respectable; finally, he is also the only man, among so many egoists, capable of feeling true love.[32] Love is for him something precious and is much more important than the material seduction he is every day surrounded by, but it is also a trick, indeed the greatest of tricks, because it is "Hochstapelei [. . .] des Herzens" and like "Sehnsucht" it presages "die Unendlichkeit" (KW7,243f.). Hence a renunciation is called for, because love, the true love that ties two human beings together, transcending earthly finiteness, basically means separation and detachment. Bertrand had also said the same to Elisabeth, significantly changing the same theme to be found in the first volume of the trilogy: "Liebe ist etwas Absolutes, Elisabeth, und wenn das Absolute im Irdischen ausgedrückt werden soll, dann gerät es immer ins Pathos, weil es eben unbeweisbar ist. [. . .] Es gibt bloß ein wirkliches Pathos und das heißt Ewigkeit. Und weil es keine positive Ewigkeit gibt, muß es negativ werden und heißt Nie-wieder-sehen. Wenn ich jetzt abreise, ist die Ewigkeit da; dann sind Sie ewigkeitsfern und ich darf sagen, daß ich Sie liebe. [. . .] Es gibt eben bloß ein einziges wahrhaftes Pathos, das der Entfernung, des Schmerzes . . . [. . .] Ich möchte, daß du die Liebe nie anders erlebtest und erlittest als in dieser letzten und unerreichbaren Form" (KW1;109,112). Both these characters of Broch seem, therefore, to withdraw from love or rather, by excluding matrimony, from the responsibility and danger of love's being fully realized. It is, however, quite legitimate, as there could be no happy ending, which would be completely out of place here and seem quite banal, for Laborde to reply to Seidler, who invites him to flee and enjoy his old age, at the end of the play: "Lassen Sie mir die Türe offen . . . zum Ausfliegen . . . und zum Wiederkommen . . ." (KW7,302); or that Agnes should say of him to her father: "Laborde gehört zu den Menschen, die die anderen wieder leben lehren, wenn es nicht weitergeht . . . aber damit ist seine Mission erschöpft . . . mehr kann er nicht leisten . . . dann muß man ihn ziehen lassen . . ." (KW7,293).

Recently, much has been said about the influence Broch is supposed to have felt, with the work considered here, of Eugène Scribe, a French writer of comedies and librettos who was extremely successful in the first half of the nineteenth Century, providing his audience, on the one hand, with pleasant entertainments and, on the other, with plots and stage devices, great intuition, clever dialogues and psychological characterization. We must admit that the points Schürer[33] makes, in this regard, are convincing, even if we have no documentation about it. Scribe's "pièces bien faites" — from *Le Mariage d'argent, La Passion Secrète, Les Actionnaires* to *La Famille Riqueborg ou le Mariage mal assorti,* just to mention a few of his over three hundred works — do indeed deal with themes similar to those in *Aus der Luft gegriffen,* that is to say money (a favorite, if not essential topic of conversation in Broch's father's house in Teesdorf), marriages of convenience, dowries, love affairs, speculation on the Stock Exchange, suicides due to financial losses, journeys to far-off countries, and so on. These comedies could not but have been familiar to the dramatist, as the critic very reasonably suggests, because they were frequently performed both in Austria and in Germany even after the First World War and because, as a well-educated, wealthy, theater-going member of the bourgeoisie, he must undoubtedly have been an attentive spectator. However, it is above all money, just as in Broch's comedy, around which the French writer's work revolves and which powerfully conditions the behavior of nearly all the characters, so much so, as has rightly been observed, that it "takes the place of the *fatum* of Greek tragedy. Probably in no other dramatic literature does one find so many discussions of bank accounts, investments, loans, mortgages, dividends and business failures."[34] Needless to say, Scribe's world was that of post-Napoleonic France, while Laborde's is that of an isolated luxury hotel for the elite in the period of the great crisis; Scribe describes a family that is still united and is morally inflexible when it is a matter of defending marriage as an inviolable institution, while Broch is undoubtedly more modern and liberal (if not to say at times libertine) when dealing with ethical problems: he does not present married couples, but rather his women have little compunction when it comes to breaking off a former engagement and choosing a new partner; he also takes a giant step forward towards the process of "the disintegration of values," which he himself theorized, obviously for the worse. Everyone feels of course deeply rooted in his own age and mentality, feelings and styles may change with noticeable differences, but there is no way that the influences can be denied.

Why, then, should such a witty comedy not have obtained at the time the recognition that it undoubtedly deserved, either from publishers or from theaters that loved and encouraged the so-called "light" genre? It was, after all, explicitly "non-political," written above all to meet people's taste and, moreover, involved very few characters, presenting no difficulties as far as staging is concerned. The scenes never change, as there are at the same time the reception and three rooms in a hotel, and Broch himself made a precise drawing of it to accompany the text. (KW7,411) It fully respects the three Aristotelian unities and is, therefore, I might add, particularly suitable for any theater. It may, perhaps, be explained by the fact that *Aus der Luft gegriffen,* this "epitaph" for Broch's career as industrialist, to use Durzak's somewhat unusual melancholic, funereal term,[35] is quite different from the other comedies of the time because it is somehow more refined and ambiguous in an original way, it is, one might say, a sort of "two-dimensional" comedy, which is both pleasing and irritating, and which the audience enjoys but may find a disappointment. Is this perhaps the main reason for the doubts that the theatrical managers and directors had when the author sent them the play? The fact remains that in a final analysis it reveals only too clearly the connection between Laborde's clandestine maneuvers and the "clean," public ones of international finance, thus contributing, thanks to the ironic coincidence of what is legal and what is illegal, of honesty and dishonesty, of bourgeois morality and an individual's criminal ability, to a logical, coherent, fierce, demystifying and, therefore, politically unacceptable criticism of society and the system.[36] This second play by Broch could, in short, also *mutatis mutandis* testify to the theories the author formulated, as we know, about the renewal of the theater, that is to say, in order to attain the *Stildrama,* the fundamental distinction between the "naturalistic" basis (including the complex maneuvers to save Seidler's bank from bankruptcy, along with the relevant love stories) and the so-called "Sophoclean stratum," the deeper meaning that, as Petersen has rightly remarked in his essay, ideally transcends and denounces it.[37]

In Broch's *Aus der Luft gegriffen,* we can see an international high society, the boredom of the luxury of barons and bankers and a behavior that is totally conditioned by finance and the Stock Market, represented in a refined, *blasé* microcosm. According to some critics, there is here a criticism on the author's part of Brüning's deflationary politics and the restrictive monetary policy of the American Federal Reserve Board,[38] through Laborde's tactics that render the economy dynamic by starting up latent productive forces.

IV

The other "soap bubble" of Broch's theater, his "Schwank mit Musik" *Es bleibt alles beim Alten,* is undoubtedly on a much lower key because the characters are only the much more humble attorneys, accountants, shop stewards, servants, theater managers, directors, playwrights, stage managers, art directors, policemen, actors and factory owners in a provincial Austrian town, who, unlike Laborde, Seidler, Agnes and Stasi, have no knowledge of the outside world, do not show off any wealth, do not believe that life revolves around money, are not complicated, do not habitually try to cheat and, above all, do not hesitate to use their own lively, local manners of speech, something that makes us immediately appreciate them. Broch was the first to be, perhaps, over-critical of the play, judging it to be, in the above-mentioned letter to Rényi-Gyömröi of October 5, 1934, "miserabel [. . .], so daß ich es niemandem zeige" (KW13/1,294). But it must also be said that the author did not later spare, following the successful première in Zurich, any of his theatrical works from his own harsh criticism, not even a tragedy as important as *Die Entsühnung,* as he himself admitted to the Austrian writer Hanns von Winter a few months before his sudden death: "An der Verschweigung des Dramas aber möchte ich festhalten. [. . .] Zwei deutsche Bühnen wollten es jetzt bringen, und ich habe die Aufführung inhibiert" (KW13/3,501). We should not, therefore, be surprised by his severe judgment of this "Schwank mit Musik," as Broch took so many pains with his style and form and was only too aware of the ethics of his highly demanding *Kunstauffassung* to somehow "contaminate" it with such a light, humble and harmless "joke." What is perplexing is rather the lapidarian and peremptory opinions — the only ones we have, by the way — of two such well-known scholars as Durzak and Lützeler, the former saying that the play lacks significance (ohne Bedeutung),[39] the latter that it is "ohne rechten Witz"[40] and the fact that there has as yet been no criticism or interpretation of the work in any bibliography about Broch, but only bare references to the title.

In actual fact, *Es bleibt alles beim Alten,* while certainly not being of the same quality, in comic situations, characterization and dialogue, as the brilliant comedy analyzed above, is rather more than just an *opus minimissimum,* a *Witzchen,* an *Unterhaltungs-Schreiberei,* a pure and simple *divertissement,* because it offers the reader and spectator an interesting and absolutely not casual theme for at least three principal reasons: a) for the caricature, once again, of a spoilt, lazy, good-for-nothing son, who is here, however, not in the guise of a gentleman trickster, but in

the much more likely one of a classic, intelligent "black sheep" misunderstood and derided by most members of the family; b) for the clearly autobiographical background to the whole plot, which permits a reader to suggest a few useful considerations about the author's psychology; c) finally, of course on the plane of a light "Schwank mit Musik," for the variation on one of the great dilemmas of our existence, that is to say, the eternal conflict between art and bourgeois life, between fiction and reality, with the additional, highly effective, expedient of "a play within a play." It is, all in all, quite a lot for a mere literary jest unworthy of such a famous author, for an insubstantial, ephemeral "soap-bubble," deemed by some to have not even the slightest significance.

"I suggested this title too to my father," wrote Hermann Friedrich Broch de Rothermann to Lützeler in a long letter of February 7, 1973, "but otherwise I contributed even less to the farce than to the comedy, except for some gags and humorous ideas for certain comic situations. (. . .) The farce was born as a pure and simple joke in our family: on the one hand, its true aim is to represent an affectionate parody about a difficult, idle but in the opinion of his father genial son, and, on the other, it reflects at the same time the author's desire that the son achieve success and enjoy the pleasures of life."[41] There can be no doubt that from his early, troublesome childhood, Armand had been the cause of several problems for Broch, who had been constantly concerned about affording him a good education, culture and a solid profession. At the time when his father used him as a model for the character of Hans Seyfried / alias Heinrich Seebacher in the pretence of "a play within a play," who is convinced that his nature is essentially that of a "bürgerlichen, strebsamen und fleißigen Kaufmannes" (KW7,315), and that he might work perfectly well in the firm if only he were permitted to, his son had already spent the years from 1924 to 1928 in one of the most prestigious schools for the upper bourgeoisie, the Collège de Normandie in Clères near Rouen, and then behaved like a perfect, irresponsible *viveur,* accustomed to luxury and convenience, trying to find all the ways to obtain for his "grande vie" as much money as he might from his father (who, on the other hand, had increasingly less) and from his paternal grandparents; he was not at all interested, while continuing his travels around the world, in finding a steady job and making his own living. "Nun liegt die Sache so, daß heute niemand [. . .] Dir eine solche Existenz gewährleisten [kann]," the father wrote to his son. And he continued in his ironic, pedagogic manner in his letter of August 16, 1932: "Vor zwanzig Jahren hätte man noch von Sicherheiten sprechen können. Heute ist das Leben absolut unsicher geworden, es ist entsetz-

lich hart geworden, und niemand, auch der wohlmeinendste Vater kann diese Härte abwenden" (KW13/1,205). It must, however, also be said that in the thirties Broch's son was not just content to depend, in one way or another, on his father's financial aid but also worked as editor's secretary at the Internationale Literarische Agentur (ILA) in Vienna and as correspondent for the *Neue Freie Presse*. He left Austria in March, 1939, after living in Greece from 1934 to 1937, stayed in French internment camps from September, 1939, to June, 1940, spent a year in the Foreign Legion and finally emigrated to the United States in October, 1941. Here, he first married the daughter of the German writer Jakob Wassermann (from whom he divorced in 1949), in 1942 directed the Short Wave Listening Post of the "Daily News," was recruited in 1943 by the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) for missions in Algeria, in Italy and in Austria, and left the army in 1946 with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel. After this, he was a highly praised interpreter for UNESCO and the United Nations, and published more recently the translation into English of both *Die Entsühnung* (The Atonement, 1972, in collaboration with George E. Wellwarth) and *Die Verzauberung* (The Spell, 1987). But above all, after Broch's death on May 30, 1951, he edited with a great sense of responsibility and determination the enormous *Nachlaß* which was found in various places and recomposed it in an exemplary fashion with the help of Annemarie Meier-Graefe and a group of his father's friends, among whom Brody, Henry Seidel Canby, Curt von Faber du Faur and Hannah Arendt herself, in the Hermann Broch Archive of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. He himself died, at the age of 84, on June 15, 1994. It was only in September of that year that I started my research at Yale and I was to meet him, with his second, Japanese wife Sachiko Yoshizawa in his apartment in New York. His sudden death left me all the more regretful for arriving too late for an important encounter with destiny.

The environment proposed in the fiction of his farce and the real historical one of young Broch's family can therefore be perfectly superimposed on each other. This is not only for the reason that money, taken to mean "cash," "budget," and "soundness" of the firm, plays both on the stage and in the factories in Teesdorf exactly the same role. Something that Broch's first wife, Franziska von Rothermann, did not like about those early years of marriage was indeed "der ständige Familienstreit über Geldangelegenheiten. Die gesamte Brochfamilie — bis auf Hermann — schien kein anderes Gesprächsthema zu kennen. Für sie hatte Geld nie eine Rolle gespielt; sie war, ohne sich dessen bewußt zu sein, eine Verschwenderin."[42] A second reason is that the two old bosses

in the farce, with their clinging to methods of production and organization that are by then out-dated for a modern firm, very closely resemble the miserly, strict father of the Viennese writer, who would continually complain about his sons in these words: "der eine (Hermann) wolle die Firma loswerden und verkrieche sich in seine Bücher, und der andere (Friedrich) sei ein Schürzenjäger."[43] As for the invention of the new valve on the part of Hans/Heini, the author must have got his inspiration from a true event in his life, that is when in the summer of 1907 he himself constructed, together with the head of the Obere Spinn- und Webeschule in Mühlhausen, where he had studied and obtained his diploma as textile engineer, a machine for mixing cotton with other fibers and had officially registered it at the Patent Office in Vienna.

Finally, as far as the dichotomy between normality and transgression, between reality and fiction — which constitutes one of the main themes in the farce — is concerned, it seems that Broch really does accept Thomas Mann's "Zwiespalt von Kunst und Leben," obviously adapting this double optics to the lighthearted tone of this type of play, which is built entirely on the irreconcilable conflict between the healthy, placid bourgeois respectability, so often unbearably hypocritical and uniform, and the dangerous, disruptive spirituality of aesthetic experience. In any case, the author was to return in 1947 to this question, which was clearly very dear to him, during his exile in America, in "Outline for a Novel *Victorious Defeat,*" a sketch that is to a great extent autobiographical and therefore unusual for him. He proposed this work in English to Frances B. Colby and it represents exactly what Broch then meant by "essentialism": "He decides to become a poet himself and never to marry. [. . .] He sees clearly that he never will be the 'young industrial leader' that was his destiny in the eyes of his family and even in his own" (KW13/3,172f.). Thus Hans has to face the dilemma of whether to enter his father's firm or continue in his successful career as a playwright. He chooses the latter, just as Broch did after the sale of his factory and renunciation of his job as a brilliant industrialist. Similarly, the other protagonist in the farce, Robert von Kuntner, is an actor just like Baron Laborde in *Aus der Luft gegriffen:* they are both of the same extraction, with an identical *Weltanschauung,* they both belong to the world of artists and, as such, live outside conventional society, while they are both quite aware of its rules, one in the field of law (KW7,321), the other in the field of economics and finance. Moreover, both characters share a remarkable ability to solve difficult situations in which others seem to be irretrievably lost, not necessarily due to their own doing. The tactics of the gentleman-swindler, who is the only one in the comedy to have had

any experience of real life, of the unreality and of the fragility of human feelings, which is why he leaves Agnes free to follow her illusions, actually consist, as in the case of Münchhausen, in "das Menschenunmögliche kraft der Lüge möglich zu machen, damit die Welt wieder funktioniere" (KW7,279). It will, on the other hand, be Robert who is willing "Ordnung zu machen" (KW7,326), well aware that love is true only when it is "eine Frage des Herzens" instead of "eine des Berufes" (KW7,338) and contrasts with the "Sehnsucht nach gesicherter Bürgerlichkeit" (KW7,324) to which every woman aspires, to discover Hans' artistic talent, thus helping him to find his own way, and to have the idea for the new type of valve that will save the firm in its uncertain financial situation. Obviously, like the non-existent petroleum of Teheran Oil, these "inventions" do not really exist, but what difference could such a detail make in "a play within a play," in which all the characters, in the irony of fate, as must admit disconsolate Firbaß himself (KW7,386), have become actors, seeking in bewilderment their own identity? "Macht nichts, werden sie halt existieren," says Robert to Lorle, calming her down, "Wird alles in die Realität umgesetzt . . . vielleicht" (KW7,329).

Notes

[1] Hermann Broch, *Teatro. Introduzione e traduzione a cura di Roberto Rizzo. Postfazione di Claudio Magris* (Milano: Ubulibri, 2001). Of the three plays, only the tragedy had been published before Lützeler's edition, in which it was given both in the *Bühnenfassung* and in the *Buchfassung*. Previously it had come out but incomplete, with only the last scene of Act II and arbitrarily entitled, according to the performance in Zurich (see below), *Denn sie wissen nicht, was sie tun,* in the number dedicated to Broch on his sixtieth birthday of *Die Fähre* 1.8 (1946), 479–83; in the radio-play broadcast on May 30, 1961, by Radio Wien and Radio Zurich, to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the author's death (*Die Entsühnung. Schauspiel. In der Hörspielfassung und mit einer Einleitung von Ernst Schönwiese* [Zurich: Rhein Verlag and Vienna: Bergland Verlag, 1961]; and in the English translation edited by G. E. Wellwarth and by the playwright's son, Hermann Friedrich Broch de Rothermann: Hermann Broch, *The Atonement,* in: *German Drama Between the Wars. An Anthology of Plays,* ed. George E. Wellwarth (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1972), 19–106.

[2] See Hermann Broch — Daniel Brody, *Briefwechsel* 1930–1951, Eds. Bertold Hack and Marietta Kleiß. (Frankfurt am Main: Buchhändler-Vereinigung, 1971), note to Letter no. 220. This exchange of letters will henceforth be cited as (BBB).

[3] Broch's wish was actually carried out. Edwin and Willa Muir translated the text of *Die Entsühnung* in January, 1933; unfortunately their translation has been lost and the work was never staged in an English theater. See the *Selected Letters of Edwin*

Muir. Edited with an Introduction by Peter H. Butler (London: Hogarth Press, 1974), 81.

[4] Thomas Koebner, *Hermann Broch. Leben und Werk* (Bern, München, 1965), 33.

[5] The helpful indications are by Paul Michael Lützeler, who points out the clearly biographical background to the play, besides its social, political, historical, literary and aesthetic characteristics, in his reconstruction of the author's life *Hermann Broch. Eine Biographie* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1985), 154 f. In the textile factory his father owned in Teesdorf, near Vienna, Broch had first been a member of the board of administrators (1909) and later from 1915 to 1927, the year in which the firm was handed over to his friend Wolf, managing director, having full responsibility for the running of the business.

[6] Thomas Koebner, "Brochs Trauerspiel 'Die Entsühnung' (1932)," in: *Hermann Broch*. Ed. Paul Michael Lützeler (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1986), 78.

[7] See the introduction, "Zur Aktualität Hermann Brochs," in: P. M. Lützeler, *Hermann Broch,* 13.

[8] Ernst Schürer, "Brochs 'Die Entsühnung' und das Drama der Neuen Sachlichkeit," *Modern Austrian Literature* 13. 4 (1980), 83. For a succinct and useful analysis of the *Zeitstück* and of the period when it flourished in Germany, from 1928 to 1930, it is enough here to refer to the work by Jost Hermand and Frank Trommler, *Die Kultur der Weimarer Republik* (Munich: Nymphenburger Verlagshandlung, 1978), 246–60. There is also an extensive review of the theatrical productions of those years to be found in Wolfgang Rothe, ed., *Die deutsche Literatur in der Weimarer Republik* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1974), 19–113; in Paolo Chiarini, ed., *Il teatro nella Repubblica di Weimar* (Roma: Istituto Italiano di Studi Germanici, 1984); and, in a shorter version, in Chapter IV ("Ascesa e declino dell'avanguardia prima maniera: la letteratura e il teatro") of the now classical text by Walter Laqueur, *La Repubblica di Weimar* (Milano: Rizzoli, 1996), 141–94.

[9] I am referring, for example, to Schürer, 91 f.; to Lützeler, *Hermann Broch. Eine Biographie,* 157; to Koebner, "Brochs Trauerspiel 'Die Entsühnung' (1932)," 80; and to Bernhard Doppler, "'Die Entsühnung' als Zeitoper. Zur Aktualität von Brochs Trauerspiel 1996," in: *Hermann Broch: Perspektiven interdisziplinärer Forschung,* ed. Arpad Bernáth, Michael Kessler and Endre Kiss (Tübingen: Stauffenburg Verlag, 1998), 245.

[10] Broch was again to mention Reger as an exponent of the "rationale[n] Roman" in his lecture "Das Weltbild des Romans" (KW9/2,112).

[11] For an interpretation of the novel, see Jost Hermand, *Unbequeme Literatur. Eine Beispielreihe* (Heidelberg: Stiehm, 1971), 150–75.

[12] The expression "großes Theater" also recurs in the letter Broch had sent the day before, on October 11, 1932, again from Munich, to his cousin Alice Schmutzer (1884–1949). The original of this unpublished handwritten letter is in my possession.

[13] Egon Vietta published his essay "Hermann Broch" a few months later in the *Neue Rundschau* 45.5 (1934), 575–85.

[14] These remarks by Broch on *Die Entsühnung* were included under the title of "Erneuerung des Theaters?" (KW7,403–6) in the programme (N. 23) for the pre-

mière of the play at the Schauspielhaus in Zurich on March 15, 1934; and in the "Wiener Zeitung" 314 (Nov. 1934), 3.

[15] See Manfred Durzak, "Epilog des Wertzerfalls. Zur Originalfassung einer Tragödie und zu einer unbekannten Komödie von Hermann Broch," in: *The Germanic Review* 41.3 (1966): 222. For the critic *Die Entsühnung* and *Aus der Luft gegriffen oder die Geschäfte des Baron Laborde* constitute the epilogue to the "disintegration of values" shown by Broch in the *Schlafwandler* trilogy.

[16] See Doppler, 246. Lesky's text referred to by Doppler is *Die griechische Tragödie* (Stuttgart: Kröner, 1938).

[17] Some lines of the Epilogue, 2 recall in style and lyrical-symbolic transcendency the prophetic words that mother Gisson on her deathbed pronounces in the last chapter of *Die Verzauberung,* transforming the mystery of life into a myth (KW3,364).

[18] See also Broch's sarcastic remarks to the Muirs of December 18, 1932: "[. . .] so viel Dummheit und Sachunkenntnis wie beim Theater habe ich überhaupt noch nirgends angetroffen" (KW13/1,227).

[19] That, for example, the *Totenklage* constitutes a sudden, unjustified break in style compared to the realism of the previous scenes and does not fit in entirely within the overall context of the work is unquestionable and Durzak himself actually points it out, 233.

[20] See also his "Technische Bemerkungen zur Aufführung der 'Entsühnung' (Buchfassung)," in which the sound effects that assist the change of scenes and contribute to obtaining the stylized, abstract naturalism the author desired are considered more important (KW7, 408) than the foreseen yet useful introductory film-strips that are used to vary central motifs in the films of the Weimar Republic, from *Dr. Mabuse, der Spieler* (1922) and *Metropolis* (1927) by Fritz Lang, *Der letzte Mann* (1924) by Wilhelm Murnau, *Die freudlose Gasse* (1925) by G. W. Pabst and *Berlin. Die Symphonie einer Großstadt* (1927) by Walter Ruttmann to *Dirnentragödie* (1927) by Bruno Rahn, *Hunger in Waldenburg* (1929) by Piel Jutzi and *Kuhle Wampe* (1932) by Slatan Dudow. Indeed, the role of the musical effects is so important that for Doppler (252 f.) Broch was to offer us with *Die Entsühnung* not so much a *Zeitstück* as a true *Zeitoper,* along the lines of those written by Max Brand, *Maschinist Hopkins* (1929) and by Georg Kaiser, *Der Silbersee* (1933, with music by Kurt Weill).

[21] Ernst Schönwiese in the introduction to his radio version of *Die Entsühnung,* 13.

[22] Durzak, 233. Durzak's essay on the "*Epilog des Wertzerfalls"* is the first critical work (among the few that exist) dedicated not only to the tragedy but also to the comedy *Aus der Luft gegriffen oder die Geschäfte des Baron Laborde,* which is perhaps also why the scholar, in his presentation of the play, commits some grave errors (as in his further references to the "Schwank mit Musik" *Es bleibt alles beim Alten*) that it is my duty to point out: the text was *not* written in the late sommer 1934, it was *never* staged under a psdeudonym with a great success in Vienna, *nor* was the farce almost completely a work of Broch's son (234).

[23] Lützeler, *Hermann Broch. Eine Biographie,* 180.

[24] The author, on the other hand, strangely confesses to Daisy Brody on October 16, 1934, that he has written "ein[en] Schmarrn" which, however, also represents "ein 'literarisches Wagnis' für das Theater" (KW13/1, 296).

[25] After officially registering the copyright of the comedy on March 3, 1952, H. F. Broch de Rothermann turned, among others, to Berthold Viertel at the Akademietheater and to Gottfried Reinhardt, the son of the famous director, who held at that time an important post at the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studios. But he was not to be successful in these attempts.

[26] These unpublished letters, besides others that will be cited henceforth, are conserved in the Hermann Broch Archive of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven CT, USA, in Broch's son's *Correspondence* and are published here for the first time by courtesy of the Curator of the Yale Collection of German Literature, Christa Sammons, who was of great assistance, with her competence, in the research I carried out there during the fall of 1994. I am extremely grateful to her. The references given in brackets refer to the numbered boxes (B.) and folders (F.) that contain them, in this case, therefore, in order, B. 2 / F. 43–44, B. 8 / F. 149–61 and B. 3 / F. 54–58. As far as the two women mentioned are concerned, the former was Marion Seidel Canby, the wife of Henry Seidel Canby, professor of English and American Literature at Yale University, a good friend of Broch from the start of his exile; the latter, Ruth Norden, had been an assistant to the dramatist Hans Rothe at the Deutsches Theater in Berlin and had emigrated to the United States, where she worked for many years as a reader for the publisher Alfred A. Knopf in New York and as a journalist.

[27] In a letter to Annemarie Meier-Graefe ("Bouche"), Broch's second wife, of March 15, 1966, in *Correspondence,* B.1 / F. 7–19.

[28] P. M. Lützeler, *Hermann Broch. Eine Biographie,* 180. See, however, also the amusing characterization of his son that Broch leaves us in his letter to Armand of August 16, 1932 (KW13/1,204 f.)

[29] Karl August Horst, *Kritischer Führer durch die deutsche Literatur der Gegenwart* (München: Nymphenburger Verlagshandlung, 1962), 388. Helmut Gumtau also speaks of Broch's "ironischen und liebenswerten Humor" in his article "Ein brüderlicher Mensch" in *Der Tagesspiegel* of December 29, 1985.

[30] Lützeler, *Hermann Broch. Eine Biographie,* 181.

[31] This significant admission was made on June 21, 1932, and is reported in a letter from Durzak to Broch's son on February 20, 1966, see *Correspondence,* B.3 / F. 54–58.

[32] See the comments by Jürgen H. Petersen, "Hermann Brochs Komödie 'Aus der Luft gegriffen oder die Geschäfte des Baron Laborde,'" in: P. M. Lützler (Ed.), *Hermann Broch,* 142–44.

[33] Ernst Schürer, "Die Liebe und die Börse. Zu Hermann Brochs Hochstaplerkomödie 'Aus der Luft gegriffen,'" in: *Hermann Broch. Das dichterische Werk,* ed. Michael Kessler and Paul Michael Lützeler (Tübingen: Stauffenburg, 1987), 69–72.

[34] Neil Cole Arvin, *Eugène Scribe and the French Theater 1815–1860* (New York: Harvard University Press, 1967), 225 (cit. by Schürer, 70).

[35] Manfred Durzak, "Epitaph auf einen Industriellen. Zu einer Komödie Hermann Brochs," *Literatur und Kritik* 7 (1966), 21–28.

[36] Petersen quite rightly speaks of a "Doppelschichtigkeit," of a "doppelbödige Komik" in Broch's play, which for a long time was interpreted more as a "Verstoß gegen den Typus Komödie überhaupt" rather than as a true innovation (145).

[37] Ibid., 147.

[38] Schürer, 76.

[39] Manfred Durzak, *Hermann Broch* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1967), 34.

[40] Lützeler, *Hermann Broch. Eine Biographie,* 179.

[41] For the unpublished letter see *Correspondence,* B. 4 / F. 84–88.

[42] Lützeler, *Hermann Broch. Eine Biographie,* 53.

[43] Ibid., 76.

A Farewell to Art: Poetic Reflection in Broch's *Der Tod des Vergil*

Jürgen Heizmann

I

"POET: CREATE, DON'T TALK!" reads a much cited appeal to writers to remain silent about the conditions and intent of their actions.[1] This ban has never been binding. Authors of all times have voiced their poetic view of themselves, commented on the writing process or discussed poetic methods, frequently allowing such reflections to influence the literary work itself.

A *poeta doctus* such as Hermann Broch, having migrated from philosophy, represents naturally no exception to this. Not only did he write many essays on literary theory connecting the philosophy of history, epistemology, ethics and aesthetics, but he also provided numerous comprehensive explanations of his novels and dramas. Whether by means of articles or in letters, it was an obsession with self-commentary that Broch occasionally drove to the point of becoming a vice. His novel *Der Tod des Vergil*, which was published in 1945 while Broch was in American exile — next to *Die Schlafwandler* the second *opus magnum* of the Austrian author — is an extensive lyrical and philosophical meditation on the duties and limitations of writing. It is not an exaggeration to maintain that throughout the eight years of its composition this book gained the relevance of a *summa* for Broch: it became a balance of his own existence, his own thought and literary work.

More radically than in any other of Broch's works, the story in *Der Tod des Vergil* is reduced to a minimum. The dangerously ill Virgil lands in the harbor of Brundisium and looks back upon his life and work with a lucidity heightened by febrile delirium. Following his last conversations with his friends and the ruler, Augustus, Virgil sinks into a mortal fantasy in which he crosses over to death and eternity. Virgil undergoes a process of realization that leads to the damnation of his own literary creation. This judgment is passed with the same firmness resulting from the proximity of death with which we are familiar in the words of the Gospel

according to St. John: "And now I am no more in the world" (John, 17,10). This paradox of an aesthetics portrayed as an act of disgrace and illegitimate attitude toward the world induced Paul Michael Lützeler to discuss the negative aesthetics of Hermann Broch.[2]

Ever since Spengler's *Der Untergang des Abendlandes,* analogies between the cultural and social crisis of the early twentieth century and the Roman Empire have been popular. In like manner, Broch's Virgil also serves as a mouthpiece for the characterization of his own poetic position and for the depiction of the problematic of modern poetics in general. It should be noted here again that the first rendition of the topic, the story "Die Heimkehr des Vergil," emerged from a planned essay on the philosophy of history on the theme "Die Kunst am Ende einer Kultur" (KW10/1,53).

It is well known that Broch associated the novel with the task of reinventing a cultural synthesis, a unified worldview, in a divided modern society. This worldview would return to man those ethical-metaphysical points of orientation that had vanished with the fragmentation of the world into innumerable contingent value systems, a task which in Broch's opinion neither the natural sciences nor philosophy, desiccated into positivism, could undertake. Broch used the term *polyhistorischer Roman* (KW9/2,115) for this new form of novel in search of knowledge, seeking the entire and real relationships in a contingent world. Research has clearly emphasized the influence of Lukács and Hegel on his novelistic poetics.[3] The kaleidoscopic narrative technique in his inaugural novel *Die Schlafwandler,* which combines epic, lyric, and dramatic methods with a theoretical discourse, can be understood rather as a logical formal transposition of the splintered modern world. Despite the reconciliatory conclusion, the impression of disparity and dissolution is scarcely relieved.[4] Contemporaries have perceived this dissonance in itself, next to the innovative narrative techniques, as being specifically modern. After the publication of the book, however, the author soon became aware that he would not be able to proceed with his scientific-poetic method, as it was not capable of engendering the new unity of the world image that he desired. In a letter to Frank Thiess dated April 6, 1932, Broch takes an extremely critical stance toward the theoretical elements of his first work: it dawned on him that he ran the danger of rational excess while writing it. Broch expresses doubt about the "additive method" of the third part of the trilogy in particular; this method is but a rational approach to the irrational realization that he has in mind. He expresses hope in a letter that he will succeed in transforming the addition into a proper synthesis. And shortly thereafter he writes: "bloß

das Irrationale, das Dichterische wirkt von Mensch zu Mensch" (KW13/1,187). Broch already indicates in *Die Schlafwandler* that the Other of reason, where it is silenced, threatens to become wild: "Und wenn das Volk sagt: 'Ein Mensch ohne Gefühl ist kein Mensch,' so steckt darin etwas von der Erkenntnis, daß es einen unauflösbaren irrationalen Rest gibt, ohne den kein Wertsystem bestehen kann und kraft dessen das Rationale vor einer wahrhaft verderbenbringenden Autonomie, vor einer 'Über-Rationalität' bewahrt bleibt" (KW1,690–91). That part of life which remains beyond the grasp of reason, that irreducible "world remnant," which causal-rational perception cannot comprehend, but the comprehension of which is the eternal yearning of man: for Broch all these points of conflict and tension become the field of work for the modern novelist.

Following this agenda, important variations emerge in Broch's conception of the novel. The objective remains as before totality, but the scientific-rational aspect is now banished from the novel; discursive language gives way more and more to the lyrical. In this way, Marianne Charrière-Jacquin correctly describes the path from *Die Schlafwandler* to *Der Tod des Vergil* as an evolution from poly-historicism to musical lyric.[5] The lyrical thus develops for Broch into an essential stylistic method for the novel in order to dissolve the constraints of time and attain totality. In the essay "Die mythische Erbschaft der Dichtung," he writes:

> Denn im Lyrischen ist das Erwachen der Seele verborgen, der mystische Weckruf, von dem die Seele den Befehl empfängt, die Augen zu öffnen, um kraft eines solchen Augen-Blicks und in ihm den Zusammenhang des Seins zu schauen, zeitlos (KW9/2,205).

It is possible that Hegel inspired this train of thought his *Ästhetik* Hegel claims that in lyric the experience of the heart is intensified as in no other form; it is the intersection of the inner and outer worlds. In any case, Broch sees in the lyric novel the appropriate medium to cope with the struggle for the new religiosity, which he deems as the principal task of his time. Language becomes the decisive, practically magical instrument: the syntax of lyric should create symbolic associations in which the idea of the absolute flashes through the mind. The lyric is the farthest removed from the logical; it approaches dance, joy and music like no other form of language. Indeed, the language of mystic speculation is also lyrical, as are prophecy and revelation.

In the novel project *Die Verzauberung,* Broch falls back on traditionally realistic narrative forms (in the hope of reaching a greater public), while on the other hand he attempts to convert his novelistic poetics

bound to irrational recognition. His preoccupation with the history of religion and mythology clearly finds expression in this novel that remained fragmentary. In 1940, in a commentary on this novel, he asserts that everywhere where writing approaches religion, it pursues mythological conceptions (KW3,385). For Broch myth is conceived foremost in a structural sense: as the dissolution of time, as the spatial rendering of existence. Lyric comes nearest to this simultaneity.

Myth refers to a time when poetry and science were related. In modernity, myth has regained its honor; ascribed to it is the capacity to reunite the fragments of the universe that had disintegrated as a result of rational laws and causalities. At the same time, it should direct itself towards the depth and origins of the human psyche, activating it and inducing it to speak. These ideas reveal a relationship to the early Romantic writers, who sought to uphold mythical forms of thought and experience in a rationalized world.

Broch's poetics must be understood in its historical context. The period after the First World War was a time of disorientation and the search for models. A broad spectrum of life-reforming movements attempted to respond to the crisis of the rationalized conception of the world and to compensate for the sense of deficiency spawned from the shattered belief in progress. A number of intellectual currents in Germany and central Europe began to think — to employ a modern catchword — holistically. The hunger for mythology[6] was a hunger for a sense of life in its entirety. Beside serious authors and artists, visionaries and charlatans appeared on the scene to save humanity through universal designs. One of these false preachers of salvation, a man from Braunau, is known to have succeeded in consolidating these emerging movements and forming them into a mass movement that set all of Europe ablaze. Broch understood precisely the fatal attractiveness of fascist ideology; the connection between politics, myth, and religion in *Die Verzauberung* bears witness to this fusion, where he sets the positive, naturally mythical knowledge of Mother Gisson against the false teachings of the populist demagogue Marius Ratti. In his book *Erbschaft dieser Zeit* (1935), Ernst Bloch, whom Broch esteemed, accuses the rationalistically narrow Marxists of having prepared through their ignorance the ground for the irrational yearnings and fears that the fascists could then refashion for themselves.[7] During the period of National Socialism, Broch's literary work may also be seen as an attempt not merely to leave the fulfillment of the people's need for myth to Hitler and his bloodthirsty allies.

II

Nevertheless, Broch's ventures into mystic-mythical areas are not aimed *against* reason, but are underlined by an Occidental thought structure reaching back to Plato: beyond the empirically observable and the scientifically explicable there is a final reality that determines everything. To express its existence is the task of the novel. In *Der Tod des Vergil* we find a unique situation in literary history in that the text is shaped by, and exemplifies, Broch's own, demanding poetics but simultaneously questions this poetics and ultimately all literature.

Virgil holds firmly to the poetic task of irrational perception or, as it appears in the novel, the perception of death. According to Virgil, poetry is not necessary for the inquiry into factual reality, the immanent, as it is the concern of the sciences. For this reason he considers the historical writings of Sallust or Livy to be more authoritative than his own hymns; and he believes the philologist and encyclopedist Varro to be invariably more important for the knowledge of farming than his *Georgica*. Since the scientific spirit of inquiry strips from the power of imagination one province after the other, to use a phrase from Schiller, the area of responsibility for art narrows appreciably: it is reduced, namely, to the inquiry into the timeless and thus the mythic, which science, even when its methods are increasingly refined, cannot reach:

> denn mag der erkennende Geist noch so tief in das Seiende dringen, mag er es gar in Ur-Elemente zerlegen (. . .) mag er es in noch so viele Bestandteile auflösen, sich einforschend ins Geheimnis atomischer Wirbel, und, mehr noch, mag er sogar die innerste Wesenheit des Menschen aufdecken, des gliederzerteilten Geschöpfes, mag er Bruchstück um Bruchstück das Menschtum durchspähen, die Gottähnlichkeit wie den Selbstbetrug menschlichen Tuns und menschlicher Sprache, mag er das Menschliche bis zur tiefsten, letzten Nacktheit entblößen, abschälend ihm das Fleisch vom Gerippe, ausblasend ihm das Mark aus den Knochen, zerstäubend seine Gedanken, so daß nichts übrigbleibt als das ausgesonderte, das göttlich zerknirschte, das unerfaßliche Ich, mag der erkennende Geist dies alles vollbringen (. . .) kein Schritt ist damit noch getan, diesseitig bleibt die Erkenntnis, irdisch bleibt sie verhaftet, sie bleibt Erkenntnis des Lebens, doch ohne Erkenntnis des Todes. (KW4,304–5)

Every form of art is obligated to this perception of death. For within this realm lies its only right to existence and ethical legitimacy. In all of its branches, Virgil explains to Caesar, even in architecture and in music, art must serve this other knowledge. "Nirgends allerdings ist die Erkennt-

nispflicht so zwingend und bündig und scharf vorgeschrieben wie im Bereich der Dichtung, denn Dichtung ist Sprache, und Sprache ist Erkenntnis" (KW4,320).

Like no other artistic medium, language is able to transport the dreamlike and the fantastic into a logical form; it has a part in the logos and a part in the mythos. This fact is precisely demonstrated by the linguistic structure of *Der Tod des Vergil*. In no other of Broch's novels does language convey expression in such an artistic sense. Language does not invent the action, nor does it recount the story; rather, language acts on its own, and over long passages is nothing but the expression of consciousness. The rhythmic, rising and falling cadences, the ceaseless sentence cycles, with their constant repetitions and word variations and their continually new approaches to expression, occasionally achieve a virtually tormenting feat of measurement of the self and the world. It is as if this language seeks orientation, as if Broch wishes to demonstrate language's running up against it's own boundaries. Virgil recognizes the danger that all this artistry is possibly nothing but aesthetic frivolity. From this he sharply delimits the language of the true bearer of salvation:

> der heilsbringende Führer nämlich hat die Sprache der Schönheit abgestreift [. . .] er ist zu den schlichten Worten vorgedrungen, die kraft ihrer Todesnähe und Todeserkenntnis die Fähigkeit gewonnen haben, an die Versperrtheit des Nebenmenschen zu pochen, seine Angst und seine Grausamkeit zu beruhigen und ihn der echten Hilfe zugänglich zu machen, er ist vorgedrungen zu der schlichten Sprache unmittelbarer Güte, zur Sprache der unmittelbaren menschlichen Tugend, zur Sprache der Erweckung (KW4,130).

Virgil's magnificent tirades against the resplendence of his language, his attacks on "die Verworfenheit einer Schönheit, die sich selbst zum Gesetz gesetzt hat / um ihrer selbst willen / insichbeschlossen, unerneuerbar, unerweiterbar, unentwickelbar" (KW4,117) may be read, without overemphasizing the biographical, as a critical self-inquiry. His *Verzauberung* contains long, lyrical-hymnal strings of sentences that splendidly merge nature and spiritual experience. Nevertheless, this style led Karlheinz Deschner, in the 1950s, despite his great admiration for Broch, to the criticism that this prose is permeated with a pathetic contentment, a certain artistic triumph.[8] In fact, one cannot help but believe that Broch sometimes wishes to drive his convictions of transcendence into his prose with a sledgehammer. With this incantational tone, traces of which can be found in *Die Schlafwandler,* and which becomes very dominant in *Die Verzauberung,* Broch sometimes runs the risk of celebrating only his own linguistic acrobatics. It is presumable (and many letters support the

presumption) that Broch asked himself time and again whether this artistic output was justified and whether it would lead to anything at all. After all, he took the ethical responsibility of intellectuals very seriously and, besides the novels, was occupied in the 1930s with political activities such as his work on the League of Nations Resolution. He portrays Virgil at any rate as a failed author. With his work, Virgil has attained no new perception. All that he achieved was to glorify that which existed and to reduce the eschatological hopes of his time to a very earthly emperor cult. Virgil unveils the concrete promises of his poems as a flight into imaginary worlds, as a beautiful illusion. Hence follows his resolution to burn the *Aeneid*. Hence the scornful cries from the crowd as well, that he is Caesar's Enchanter, "der Zauberer vom Cäsar" (KW4,33). An allusion to poetry's power to excite wonder may indeed be discernible in the slander, but here writing poetry is shifted rather to the realm of the traveling entertainer and the art of illusion. Nietzsche also described the poet as an enchanter and counterfeiter who deceives himself and others and who copes with life only in appearance. Virgil's explanation to the physician Charondas: "ich glaube fast, daß wir bloß das richtige Zaubern verlernt haben" (KW4,261) can be read as an admission that prophetic knowledge, such as the master poet Orpheus possessed, is lost.[9] Orpheus, whose song possessed an enchanting power of transformation, stands for the promise of poetry to open a secret passage to that lost sense. Even Virgil once dreamed this Orphic dream. An arrogant dream he eventually buries. For Virgil perceives that he combined false hopes with writing:

> Wider besseres Wissen hoffend es werde die Macht der Schönheit, es werde des Liedes Zauberkraft den Abgrund der Sprachstummheit zu guter Letzt überbrücken und ihn, den Dichter, zum Erkenntnisbringer in der wiederhergestellten Menschengemeinschaft erhöhen (. . .) Orpheus erkoren zum Führer der Menschen." (KW4,128)

However, Virgil's poetic aspirations were not the only bold ambitions. He even renounces myth:

> Ach, nicht einmal Orpheus hatte solches je erreicht, nicht einmal er in seiner Unsterblichkeitsgröße rechtfertigte solch überheblich eitle Ehrgeizträume und solch sträfliche Überschätzung des Dichtertums! (KW4,128)

Art — be it the tone of a lyre, or the voice of a boy — is empowered to enchant at moments and even to stop time. In this respect it can, if only for a moment, offer solace and relief: "Indes, selbst wenn dem so war, nicht länger als der Gesang währet die Hilfe" (KW4,129). These findings correspond to Freud's comment on the capacity of art in "Das Unbeha-

gen in der Kultur." As Freud writes, "die milde Narkose, in die uns die Kunst versetzt, [vermag] nicht mehr als eine flüchtige Entrückung aus den Nöten des Lebens herbeizuführen und ist nicht stark genug, um reales Elend vergessen zu machen."[10] Is it conceivable (and this is what Virgil desires) that there is art with an effect different from such a transitory one? If art can dissolve the forces of existence and combine that which is divided at least temporarily, then perhaps this is nobler than it appears in Broch's portrayal of Virgil, for whom Orpheus is only a bearer of intoxication, not salvation. Behind this doubt in the value of writing is Virgil's insight that poetry is only something like foresight (*Ahnung*), but cannot bring about new salvation. However the game of divination of writing lacks seriousness. Virgil no longer views poetry as a medium of true perception; the new perception, preceding all reason, will have to come from outside of art. If perception is the single justification of poetry, then it fundamentally signifies its death sentence.

Now one could object that poetry can never reach dry land, poetry is always expectation, never attainment, its truth only ever an anticipated truth. In fact, this image of poetry is evoked in a passage of the novel. It is known that Broch perceived a parallel between his own century and the first century before Christ, both being epochs of radical change. Virgil declares this location between two shores of time to be the genuine site of the poet: "oh Nacht, die Stunde der Dichtung. Denn Dichtung ist schauendes Warten im Zwielicht, Dichtung ist dämmernder Abgrund, ist Warten an der Schwelle" (KW4,63). The moment of anticipation has since Hölderlin become a paradigm of the modern poet. But why does Virgil explain to the ruler that poetry has no task any longer and may not raise its voice again until the new truth has emerged and led to redemption? And is this thought plausible in the context of the modern age? Is poetry not the realm of the incomplete that is dispelled by the certainty of any faith? Do not all teachings of salvation silence the song? Does wretched time not require poetry more urgently than time fulfilled?

The thought that only a new, blissful time will again prepare the way for art represents a diametrical opposition to Schiller's concept of art, to which Broch's poetics, as remains to be seen, shows some affinity. The basic idea in Schiller's discourse *Über die ästhetische Erziehung* (1795) is the profound depravity of the present in which the only hope remains that the rapture of art will become the predecessor to a new era of liberated men, and the theoretical culture will bring about the practical.[11] This promise of bliss from art is no longer made in *Der Tod des Vergil*. However, with the description of a cyclical consciousness of time, which becomes clear here and elsewhere in the novel, Broch offers a way out of

a linear, catastrophically accelerated history — similar to Mircea Eliade in *Cosmos and History*.[12]

III

Despite his fundamental suspicion of poetry, Virgil holds firmly to a high concept of writing. Ultimately poetry should, without becoming a cold comfort, depict universal symbols, and create a common sense of plausibility,. With these convictions Virgil emphasizes the ethical obligation of art. The word *duty* (*Pflicht*) flows just as often from his mouth as from Augustus. The insight of having failed this duty, and having been driven out of the community of men through the solitary toil on his work, is at the forefront of his self-condemnation. Yet, however much Virgil obligates the artist to serve society, he still resolutely defends the autonomous sphere of art:

> Nun denn, Augustus, ich weiß, daß der Mensch sich der Demut befleißigen soll [. . .] hingegen für die Kunst, da bin ich überheblich, wenn du es so nennen willst. Ich anerkenne jede Pflicht für den Menschen [. . .] aber ich weiß, daß man der Kunst keinerlei Pflichten aufzwingen kann, weder staatsdienende noch sonstwelche; man würde sie damit nur zur Unkunst machen. (KW4,313)

If the aesthetic is conceived as an autonomous sphere, one demarcates it from the practical sphere and the daily reality of experience. To his insistence on the intrinsic value of art belongs Virgil's consideration that he cannot present his hero simply as a prime example of virtue and morals, that art is therefore by no means only the representation of goodness and perfection (KW4,129). This freedom from exterior purposes of all kinds belongs essentially to the concept of autonomous art. Both the defense of the autonomous sphere of art and the concept of author and work emphatically represented in *Der Tod des Vergil* demonstrate that Broch may by no means be counted among the avant-garde. Broch's poetry may at best be characterized as avant-garde in so far as it seeks to surpass philosophy, and to light up the blind spots of science. Nevertheless, a hallmark of all historical avant-garde movements is, according to Peter Bürger, to tear down the barriers between art and the reality of life, to strip the work of art of its aura.[13] The will to achieve perfection in form in *Der Tod des Vergil* clearly demonstrates that Broch belongs to the literary and artistic modern age, which in spite of all advancement in means holds firmly to traditional concepts of a body of work. The modern and postmodern avant-garde have made a stand against this exacting concept of art in the modern age, which necessarily calls forth a dichot-

omy between true and untrue, high and low art. It is known what a vehement, and definitely iconoclastic, verdict Broch pronounced on the entire European literary work. In the last analysis, he only accepted Kafka.[14] It bears witness to his rigorousness that he also calls his own work into question through his protagonist Virgil. Virgil indeed declares everything that does not satisfy his own high standards to be non-artistic and attributable to poor literati. In addition to all of these incoherencies in his argumentation, a number of other difficulties emerge in connection with the autonomy of art.

First, Broch shows that the high standard of art necessarily makes the writer an exceptional person and distances him from life experience. Virgil has driven the struggle with the perfection of the work, the search for total perception, not only from his beloved Plotia, but also from his home and every human community. This inevitable *vita solitaria* of the artist striving for cosmogonic unity stands nevertheless in stark contrast to his ethical task.

Second, the sphere of play and of aesthetic illusion belongs to autonomy. Only in this sphere can man be freed from the restraints of his time and find his way to the liberty of spirit. Play serves as a utopian model that preserves the idea of unity and harmony in social alienation. For Schiller, the antagonistic powers of a person are reconciled in the play instinct. In playing, man becomes aware of his entire existence, he experiences himself as subject matter and comes to know himself in spirit. Art appears in this concept as the highest, most ideal form of playing.[15] In *Der Tod des Vergil,* however, playing and illusion are entirely devalued and moved to the realm of deception, intoxication and escapism; to Virgil, in fact, this autonomy appears as a prison of art ("Kerker der Kunst") in which the poet — even if he has good intentions to help — remains enclosed (KW4,137). Despite his insistence on its autonomy, Virgil calls for an art that breaks through the limits of its own field, which intervenes directly in reality. The question of how an art that abstains from all practical reality on the one hand, but on the other hand is able to influence this practical reality is not solved in the novel. Even in Schiller's conception, this problem does not find any conclusive solution.

Virgil makes reference to Plato as a model: "Wo es Platon gelang, da ward die Philosophie zur Dichtung (. . .) auf ihren höchsten Höhen war Dichtung hiezu imstande, war sie Grenzüberschreitung" (KW4,327). This reference must be read in this context, for an independent sphere of art does not exist in Plato at all. In Plato, art is not an undefined emotion, not a field of play, where man is free of obligations, but rather

religio. There is in Plato no middle ground between truth and falsehood. The Christian Middle Ages adopted these Platonic ideas and rejected every aestheticizing interpretation of art. For instance, light as a shaping factor for the interior of a cathedral presents a problem for the representation of higher reality, which is of sacral importance; it is not an aesthetic task.[16] If Virgil wishes to transcend the boundaries of the literary, he is attempting to bring the aesthetic back into such a context. It is to become the worship of God. Virgil's thought is meant in this way: If poetry is surmounted and annihilated, then it can once more become prayer again (KW4,180). For his own time, however, Virgil only acknowledges help that can be carried out immediately. The Muses are to keep silent.

It is possible that the work on *Der Tod des Vergil* served Broch as a process of purification, as a catharsis, enabling him to write in spite of any doubts. We do know that he climbed Mount Parnassus again. At any rate, all of the literary work that Broch drafted after 1945 returned to older projects and sprang not least from the necessities of immigration. The gesture of farewell in *Der Tod des Vergil* is meant seriously. On the plane of expression in the novel, there is no salvation for literature. On his journey to death, Virgil sees that Pegasus alone among all the stars is now on the wane: "und tief im Westen, abschiedsgewärtiger als all die anderen, ruhte das pegasische Roß quellschlagenden Hufes, ruhte dort am Rande der Kuppel" (KW4,427). And shortly thereafter the winged horse sinks down: "(. . .) das Flügelroß verblassend versank" (KW4,429).

The poetic reflection in *Der Tod des Vergil* represents the culmination point of Broch's considerations of art in general and the novel in particular. The unconventional standpoint that Broch assumes within the aesthetics of the modern age becomes clear here once again. Broch's vouching for the autonomy of art is modern, which is, his keeping the aesthetic free from moral or other sorts of impediments. The modern bourgeois concept of art developed indeed from the weakening of dogmas, above all ecclesiastical ones. The separation of the diverse value spheres, introduced by Kant in his three critiques, was an essential contribution to the manifestation of the modern age. Like hardly any other poet of the modern age, however, Broch endeavors to place the aesthetic back under the primacy of the ethical. He thereby approaches the traditional model, valid from the Christian West to the early modern age, when everything aesthetic was subject to the ethical.

The high hopes that Broch places on art and literature are on the other hand typical for that religion of art defined by a branch of the modern age. Even his Virgil, while tearing himself from limb to limb,

holds firmly to these expectations. According to this, literature completes, or even surpasses scientific knowledge. It claims to be the only veritable authority of information in a complex world. Broch's high standards, which could even be deemed excessive, overtaxing demands of art, call to mind the Early Romantics who, as I mentioned earlier, sought to rehabilitate poetry as the highest of all forms of consciousness. Schiller anticipated such high standards poetics in his *Ästhetische Erziehung*. The fundamental thought in the letters is the conviction that the Enlightenment and science are in themselves inadequate. Their achievements must be complemented by those of art. Beyond that: Schiller takes it upon himself to solve by means of aesthetics the political problem through which the French Revolution failed.[17] One might see a reflection of this in Virgil's meeting with Augustus, as the poet attempts to make clear to the ruler that the liberty brought by Augustus and the new political order are only prerequisites, only a symbol of the new era, the new perception, the new state. Even if Broch still thought himself capable of this sort of founding of religion in *Die Verzauberung,* he used his spokesman Virgil to guide this high standard of art, without relegating it entirely, back within its limits: "Die neue Erkenntnis liegt außerhalb der Kunst, außerhalb des Machtbereichs ihrer Gleichnisse" (KW4,323).

In the novel, the artistic problem is not resolved. That Virgil is finally able to accept the inevitable incompleteness of every work of man, to abstain from the destruction of his epos and to present it to Augustus out of friendship, offers a reconciliation raised to the level of the universally human, but is not capable of eliminating the literary-theoretical aporias. In this respect, Karl Menges sees a poetic weakness of design that arises out of the effort of somehow bringing the novel to a close. According to Menges, Virgil had to abandon his aesthetic scruples in order that Broch could complete his work.[18] In fact, Broch emphasizes repeatedly in his letters that the writing of *Der Tod des Vergil* was a personal and agonizing process of self-inquiry, out of which a novel developed in the course of time and out of obligation to his assistants in American exile. A novel he himself considered incomplete.

That Virgil's conflict is not resolved is reminiscent as well of the form of the Socratic dialogues to which Broch refers in one of these letters on *Der Tod des Vergil* (KW13/3,27). The intent of Socrates' questions is always to lead us to account for our conduct and ourselves. The course of the discussions leads to the realization in every case that the person asked is incapable of giving an unambiguous answer about the reasons behind his own judgment and conduct. Yet Socrates does not wish to be regarded as an initiate; rather he admits his total ignorance

every time. For him it is important to liberate men from the putative certainty of their concepts (Broch would say: from their sleepwalking), to invigorate them to seek and test, and to bring them to self-contemplation. In this light, Virgil's friends appear as Sophists: as obstinate know-it-alls who imagine themselves to possess an indisputable answer to all questions. Virgil, on the other hand, gains the Socratic level-headedness and modesty that does not believe to know what one does not know. The novel may thus also be read as a challenge always to question reality anew, to abide in this inquiry, and not to abandon oneself either blindly to the supposed self-evident truths of being or, obsessed with death, to the dark allure of nothingness. To accept this constant uncertainty within the dialectic of question and answer requires candor and courage. The philosopher Wilhelm Weischedel has described this attitude with the word *Abschied*.[19]

Notes

[1] In the epigram that is the origin of this famous quotation, Goethe does not merely address the poet, but rather the artist in general: "Bilde, Künstler! Rede nicht!" in: Johann Wolfgang Goethe, *Goethes Gedichte in zeitlicher Folge,* ed. Heinz Nicolai (Frankfurt am Main: Insel, 1982), 686.

[2] Paul Michael Lützeler, "The Avant-Garde in Crisis: Hermann Broch's Negative Aesthetics in Exile," in: *Hermann Broch — Literature, Philosophy, Politics: The Yale Broch Symposium 1986,* ed. Stephen D. Dowden (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1986), 14–31.

[3] See Viktor Žmegač, *Kunst und Wirklichkeit: Zur Literaturtheorie bei Brecht, Lukács und Broch* (Bad Homburg-Berlin-Zurich: Gehlen, 1969); Paul Michael Lützeler, "Zur Avantgarde-Diskussion der dreißiger Jahre: Lukács, Broch und Joyce," in: Lützeler, *Zeitgeschichte in Geschichten der Zeit: Deutschsprachige Romane im 20. Jahrhundert* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1986), 109–40.

[4] In my essay "Neuer Mythos oder Spiel der Zeichen? Hermann Brochs literarästhetische Auseinandersetzung mit James Joyce," *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift* 72.3 (1998), 512–30 I try to demonstrate that this contradicts the intention of the author.

[5] Marianne Charrière-Jacquin, "Zum Verhältnis Musik — Literatur im *Tod des Vergil,*" in: *Hermann Broch — Das dichterische Werk: Neue Interpretationen* (Akten des Hermann-Broch-Symposions Rottenburg-Stuttgart 1986), ed. Michael Kessler and Paul Michael Lützeler (Tübingen: Stauffenburg, 1987), 7–18.

[6] See Theodore Ziolkowski, "Der Hunger nach dem Mythos: Zur seelischen Gastronomie der Deutschen in den Zwanziger Jahren," in: *Die sogenannten Zwanziger Jahre,* eds. Reinhold Grimm and Jost Hermand (Bad Homburg-Berlin-Zurich: Gehlen, 1970), 169–201.

[7] Ernst Bloch, *Erbschaft dieser Zeit* (Zürich: Oprecht & Helbing, 1935); revised edition (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1962).

[8] Karheinz Deschner, *Kitsch, Konvention und Kunst: Eine literarische Streitschrift* (Munich: List, 1965), 87.

[9] On the complex of the Enchanter and the Orphic literary concept see Jürgen Heizmann, *Antike und Moderne in Hermann Brochs* Tod des Vergil: *Über Dichtung und Wissenschaft, Utopie und Ideologie* (Tübingen: Gunter Narr, 1997).

[10] Sigmund Freud, "Das Unbehagen in der Kultur," *Studienausgabe,* vol. X, ed. Alexander Mitscherlich, Angela Richards, and James Strachey (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1982), 212.

[11] Friedrich Schiller, "Über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen in einer Reihe von Briefen," in: *Schillers Werke, Nationalausgabe,* vol. 20, ed. Benno von Wiese (Weimar: Böhlau, 1962), 309–412.

[12] Mircea Eliade, *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return,* trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Harper, 1959).

[13] See Peter Bürger, *Theorie der Avantgarde* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1982).

[14] See KW9/2,229–31; KW13/3,411–12; KW13/3,544. See also Eric W. Herd, "Hermann Broch and the Legitimacy of the Novel," *German Life & Letters* 13 (1959–1960): 262–77; Richard Thieberger, "Hermann Brochs Zweifel am Roman," in: *Hermann Broch — Das Dichterische Werk,* 113–20.

[15] See the fourteenth Letter of Schiller's *Ästhetische Erziehung.*

[16] See Ernesto Grassi, *Die Theorie des Schönen in der Antike* (Schauberg, Cologne: DuMont, 1962).

[17] See the second and fifteenth Letters of Schiller's *Ästhetische Erziehung.*

[18] Karl Menges, "Bemerkungen zum Problem der ästhetischen Zeitgenossenschaft in Hermann Brochs *Der Tod des Vergil,*" *Modern Austrian Literature* 13.4 (1980): 42.

[19] In the original it is called "Abschied" and "abschiedliche Haltung." See Wilhelm Weischedel, *Der Gott der Philosophen: Grundlegung einer philosophischen Theorie im Zeitalter des Nihilismus,* vol. 2: *Abgrenzung und Grundlegung* (Munich: Nymphenburger Verlagshandlung, 1972), 256. See also Heizmann, *Antike und Moderne,* 78–81.

Poetry as Perjury: The End of Art in Broch's *Der Tod des Vergil* and Celan's *Atemwende*

Peter Yoonsuk Paik

I. A Delayed Verdict?

IF IT HAS BEEN THE FATE OF POETRY to be defeated, marginalized, and lorded over by philosophy, we could map the history of modernist literature between two decrees against art — Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's thesis that art works have lost their power and capacity to fulfill humanity's highest needs[1] and Theodor Adorno's pronouncement that it is barbaric to write poetry after Auschwitz.[2] It is of course between the time of these two proclamations that art in Europe embarked upon a period of unprecedented formal innovation and that poetry in particular shattered received conventions of rhetoric and syntax. Hegel's idea of the end of art is less a categorical denunciation of art-works for posing a threat to the notion of truth and the good life, the view that underpins Socrates' proposal in Plato's *Politeia* to banish the poets from the just state, than the assertion of the primacy of speculative reason in grasping the highest stages of historical consciousness. Adorno's stricture, on the other hand, stands as an ethical injunction. For it is the moral legitimacy of art that is now at stake — its very right to exist in the wake of the barbarism of war and genocide. If art does come to an end, it is because it has been radically outbid by the devastations of history. Measured against the reality of suffering, art is both inadequate and incapable of giving voice to horror and agony, or is complicit in it.

This essay focuses on two modernist authors, Hermann Broch and Paul Celan, whose works demand to be read as responses to the force of Adorno's remark. Celan, born in 1920 in Czernowitz, Romania, spent part of the war in a series of labor camps. His parents were deported from the city in June of 1942 to a concentration camp in the Ukraine, east of the river Bug. His father died of typhus later that year, and his mother was shot for being unfit to work; news of her death reached

Celan through a cousin who had escaped from the same camp. At the urging of his friend Ruth Lackner, who was concerned about the risk of his own deportation, Celan emerged from hiding to sign up for the labor battalions which the Axis government was forcing the Jewish Council to organize.[3] Between July 1942 and February 1944 he was part of a work detail that was assigned to build roads. Amid rumors of secret negotiations between the Soviets and the Romanians, Celan returned to Czernowitz shortly before the entry of the Soviet army into that city in March 1944. He was to remain in Romania until December 1947, when the Communist Party took power and declared a People's Republic, forcing the abdication of the king. Celan's journey to Vienna was a risky and difficult undertaking; he received help from Hungarian farmers in crossing the border from Romania without official papers, and slept in abandoned railway stations.[4] Celan departed at a time when the Hungarian government had adopted the policy of sending refugees back to Romania, where they were usually put on trial and shot. But some forty thousand Romanian Jews succeeded in reaching Vienna, where Celan was to remain for seven formative months before leaving for Paris, which was to become his permanent residence until his suicide by drowning in April 1970.

Already a prominent writer, Broch was among 70,000 Austrians rounded up by the Nazis in the months following the *Anschluß*. Interned as a political subversive in the prison at Alt-Aussee and facing the threat of execution or of being sent to a concentration camp, he threw himself into writing the manuscript that would become his massive poetic novel, *Der Tod des Vergil*. Feeling little hope of release, Broch would later write that the composition of this work became the means of preparing for his own imminent death (KW13/3,65). A local official, a certain Erich Dumann from Graz, managed to persuade the representatives of the Nazi party that Broch, then in frail health, was not an immediate threat to the Reich.[5] Allowed to depart for Vienna under the condition that he report to the city police, Broch endured several tense months waiting for an exit visa, during which he was witness to the mounting brutality of the Gestapo in rounding up Jews to send to Dachau. A visa secured for him by a friend, Anna Herzog, with the help of James Joyce, was ultimately withheld by the French consulate because of the stringent policies against political refugees enacted by the Edouard Daladier government. Through the efforts of friends and admirers in Britain, including his publisher Daniel Brody, Aldous Huxley, Herbert Read, Edwin Muir (who with his wife Willa had translated *Die Schlafwandler* into English), and Stephen Hudson (to whose memory Broch dedicated *Der Tod des*

Vergil), Broch was issued a three-month tourist visa for Great Britain. After three months in Britain, he left for the United States, where he completed work on the novel during the final years of the war.

Although the motifs of silence and incommunicability have long been regarded as the hallmarks of the modernist revolution in literary language, in the works of Broch and Celan the threat of silence possesses the immediacy of a historical reality. Indeed, in readings of Celan by deconstructionist critics, the recurring concerns of deconstruction — the arbitrariness of literary signification and the critique of metaphysical idealism — acquire unambiguously historical resonance, thereby presenting an implicit rejoinder to the charges of aestheticism and apodictic disregard for historical differences leveled by its opponents.[6] The notion of linguistic indeterminacy — the contradictory play of concealment and revelation that defines literary language — becomes transposed onto the oscillations of traumatic experience, which, to quote Cathy Caruth, "defies, even as it claims, our understanding."[7] Celan's poetry has thus become exemplary in recent years with regard to such issues as the limits of literary and philosophic representation, the history of modernity as one of catastrophe and genocide, and the undecidability of the linguistic sign. Broch, on the other hand, has figured far less prominently in these discussions — although two of the most compelling thinkers of poetry and the inhuman, Maurice Blanchot and George Steiner, have singled out *Der Tod des Vergil* as an extraordinary achievement both within and beyond the corpus of literary modernism. About why this has been the case I shall say a few words in my conclusion.

II. Breath-Turns and Automatons

As John Felstiner recounts in his recent biography, Celan was quite troubled by Adorno's dictum, which he took to be an affront to his vocation as a poet. (225) In 1965, an article in the monthly journal *Merkur* reproached Celan for converting the atrocities committed in the concentration camps into beautiful art. Its author, Reinhard Baumgart, took up Adorno's denunciation of aesthetic stylization for attaching recuperative meanings to and drawing pleasure from acts of inhumanity in order to argue that the taboo on poetry after Auschwitz applied equally to poetry written about Auschwitz.[8] He concluded that a poem that took the death camps as its theme amounted to sacrilege, and attacked Celan's poem "Todesfuge" for heedlessly indulging in aesthetic pleasure. As much as these remarks — and the original dictum itself — were a source of considerable anger and indignation for Celan, his own

literary project can be said to unfold through the internalization of an anti-aesthetic principle. In his "Meridian" speech of 1960, he argues that poetry in the present must subject the category of art and the aesthetic to relentless scrutiny ("im eigentlichsten Sinne radikale In-Frage-Stellung der Kunst").[9] Taking as his point of reference the artless last words of the "Kunstblinde," Lucile, in *Dantons Tod*, Celan endeavors to formulate a vision of poetry by wresting it free from the petrifying mechanisms of art, symbolized by the Medusa's head and the automaton. Taken in isolation, Lucile's cry "Es lebe der König" fails to strike the reader as particularly lyrical and appears on the surface to be a declaration of allegiance to the overthrown monarchy. Yet the fact that she shouts these words in front of the guillotine, where her husband, the Deputy Camille Desmoulins, has just been executed, grants them a harsh and startling irony that strips away the pretenses of the Jacobin regime.

Celan maintains that it is poetry that breaks through in Lucile's words, poetry as a kind of manifestation free of the contrivance and pretension that characterize the grandiloquently artful statements declaimed by the doomed Dantonists. Indeed, Lucile's statement stands as a "Gegenwort" against tyranny and oppression, in contradistinction to the beautified locutions of her husband, who becomes a puppet to words that trivialize his own fate. For Lucile, according to Celan, experiences language both in its audible concreteness and orientation towards intimate address ("für die Sprache etwas Personhaftes und Wahrnehmbares hat"). (PC3,189) Separating poetry from art is a matter of differentiating between two types of strangeness ("zwischen Fremd und Fremd zu unterscheiden"), with the strangeness of poetry emerging from the encounter and dialogue with another. (PC3, 196) The language of the poem thus travels the paths of encounter that lead to its particular listeners ("Wege einer Stimme zu einem wahrnehmenden Du"). (PC3, 201) The moments of such encounter are fraught and fleeting, however, since for Celan, dialogue is not the immediate expression of a poem but rather the movement it performs — an elusive, perhaps unattainable goal rather than a starting point. Poetry is in this sense a precarious achievement, which Celan terms an "Atemwende":

> [. . .] vielleicht schrumpft gerade hier das Medusenhaupt, vielleicht versagen gerade hier die Automaten — für diesen einmaligen kurzen Augenblick? Vielleicht wird hier, mit dem Ich — mit dem *hier* und *solcherart* freigesetzten befremdeten Ich, — vielleicht wird hier noch ein Anderes frei?

> Vielleicht ist das Gedicht von da her es selbst [. . .] und kann nun, auf diese kunst-lose, kunst-freie Weise, seine anderen Wege, also auch die Wege der Kunst gehen — wieder und wieder gehen? (PC3,196, Celan's italics)

Celan's definition of poetry as an interruption of art and as a movement towards freedom and dialogue represents a deliberate break from Martin Heidegger's idolization of poetry's powers to disclose both the nature of language and the nature of being. Indeed, Celan's poetics, unlike that of Stéphane Mallarmé, Paul Valéry, and Gottfried Benn, whose works in their divergent ways reflect an elemental confidence in the "Macht des Wortes," brings us face to face, according to Harald Weinrich, with the "Ohnmacht der Worte."[10] What is fundamental to Celan's anti-aesthetic, even anti-poetic undertaking is less the condition of the poem as a bounded object than the effort to surpass its limits — to attain an exterior signified by the address to a concrete other.

III. What Remains Rewritten

The poem "Weggebeizt," published in the collection *Atemwende* (1967), exemplifies the unstable and unbounded relationships between poetry and otherness in Celan's work.[11] It refers to three or four different types of speech, and posits at least one of them as an antithesis to the poem, or rather what the first stanza names with the neologisms "Meingedicht" and "Genicht":

> WEGGEBEIZT vom
> Strahlenwind deiner Sprache
> das bunte Gerede des An-
> erlebten — das hundert-
> züngige Mein-
> gedicht, das Genicht.
>
> Aus-
> gewirbelt,
> frei
> der Weg durch den menschen-
> gestaltigen Schnee,
> den Büßerschnee, zu
> den gastlichen
> Gletscherstuben und -tischen.

Tief
in der Zeitenschrunde,
beim
Wabeneis
wartet, ein Atemkristall,
dein unumstößliches
Zeugnis.

At the outset, "Weggebeizt" attributes the powers of corrosion to the speech of the poem's interlocutor — among the meanings of "beizen" are "to etch" and "to penetrate into something with acid," referring to caustic processes of treating wood and leather. The "Strahlenwind" of this other's voice is said to "burn" or "cauterize" away the inauthentic chatter of the false poem. Yet, to what extent is the poem itself — and not only the hundred-tongued "perjury poem" that it names — exposed to the workings of this annihilating wind? Indeed, the question of whether the poem's referential structure, shaken at the start by the cauterizing voice of the other, shelters or collapses under the pressure of "Zeugnis" and its counter-word, "Atemkristall," in its final strophe, underscores the uncanny strangeness one encounters when following Celan's prescription of launching art hermetically inward, a movement of concentration that paradoxically results in an opening out towards freedom: "Geh mit der Kunst in deine allereigenste Enge. Und setze dich frei" (PC3,200). The word "Zeugnis" may most conspicuously bear the burden of referring to a catastrophic history, but does it then stand for the otherness that the poem hurries toward but cannot grasp, or does it name the silence of what remains behind after the purgative effects of the "Strahlenwind"? If etching and corrosion both give form by virtue of negation — by harrowing an unbroken surface or by eating it away — is the unassailable "Zeugnis" accordingly projected as the unattainable horizon of the poem, or is it forsaken as its unspeakable detritus?

What lies between the annihilating wind and the crystallized breath is a glacier. Anne Carson notes that, of the two varieties of poetry sometimes juxtaposed in Celan's works, sand art and snow art, the former "may represent the entire vast improvident and infinitely replicable burned-out linguistic store of poeticizing poetry."[12] Snow art, by contrast, is more clearly linked to the experience of time, to finitude. With its explicit references to an early poem and disowned collection of the same title, "Der Sand aus den Urnen," the poem "Keine Sandkunst mehr," which comes after "Weggebeizt" in the volume *Atemwende,* institutes a break from an earlier set of motifs, including the "Meister"

of "Todesfuge" (PC2,39). Yet the kind of snow art evoked by "Weggebeizt" does not have to do with the process of melting away that occurs in the final lines of "Keine Sandkunst mehr" ("Tiefimschnee / Iefimnee / I-i-e"), which, as Carson explains, draws to the fore the time-bound character of the poem. Rather, the imagery of snow and ice in "Weggebeizt" points to an opposite transformation — the processes of melting and freezing whereby snow (and, for that matter, sand) passes from the conditions of opacity and dispersal to those of transparency and compression.

The wind of the addressee's voice opens up or reveals a "path" through the snow, which is comfortingly "human-shaped" in comparison to the image of the eyebrow erringly harrowed into the sand by the "festering toe" of "Der Sand aus den Urnen": "mit schwärender Zehe malt er im Sand deine Braue. / Länger zeichnet er sie als sie war."[13] The "Büßerschnee" of the following line is suggestive of the pathos of atonement, yet holds back from specifying its object. According to Krzysztof Ziarek, this "image" discloses "the ethical significance of the poem, an attempt to 'atone' (?) for the indifference of words and their semantic involvements" (question mark in the original), (Ziarek,177) whereas Klaus Weissenberger looks back to the "Meingedicht" of the preceding strophe as the offense which the word seeks to expiate.[14] "Büßerschnee," however, is not a neologism constructed by Celan but a technical term drawn from glaciology, referring to the intricately patterned, sloping pinnacles of snow that result from the evaporation and the exposure of the firn, or snow which has endured a year of melting, to the intense sunlight of high altitudes. The name derives from their resemblance to "Büßer in weißen Hemden," which are often found in long rows, with their peaks tilting toward the noonday sun.[15]

In a reading of the poem that accords detailed attention to its glaciological terminology, Gerhard Buhr notes that the vocabulary of glaciers is pervaded by "anthropomorphizing metaphors" evoking the architecture of houses, the tasks of housekeeping, and the elements of food preparation.[16] The adjective "gastlich" thus acquires unexpectedly literal overtones in relation to a technical language made up of compounds with such words as "-haushalt," "-korn," "-garten," "-topf," and "-glöckchen," among many others.[17] "Gletschertisch," or "glacier table," mentioned in the final line of the strophe, is the name for a rock slab that rests on a plinth of snow, which it has covered with shade and thus kept from melting away. "Gletscherstube," on the other hand, is not a part of the existing vocabulary of the glaciology, but rather a compound invented by Celan. Buhr speculates that Celan actually has in mind "Glet-

scherhöhlen," the hollows that develop inside a glacier as a result of the draining of water and the exposure to air. (Buhr,40) Yet the sound of the word, in my view, brings it into proximity with "Gletscherstrübe," the mixture of meltwater and powder from stones that have been pulverized under the pressure of accumulating snow and ice. More significant, with respect to the earlier motifs of Celan's poetry, the neologism "Gletscherstube" appears to be an oblique, partially veiled reference to one of his most memorable metaphors of the inhuman, the "schwarze Milch" of "Todesfuge." The other name for this mixture of water and sediment is "Gletschermilch."

Yet the process of ascribing an inexorable pathos — both explicit (the penitence of snow) and implied (through the obscured reference to another form of inorganic "milk") — to the scientific language of glaciology is not sufficient to open up the passage that the poem calls forth from the clearing away of idle talk and prevaricating verse to the "Zeugnis" of the final line. Indeed, an earlier draft of the poem closes with an admission of the limitless capriciousness of words or the capacity of language for endless duplicity: "dein un- / wahres, umstößliches Zeugnis." Celan changed this phrase to its opposite, to "dein unumstößliches Zeugnis," only when he had decided to insert the word "Atemkristall" before it.[18] Underscoring the transformative effects wrought by the formulation of the "Atemkristall" upon the poem's relation to its exterior, Ulrich Baer writes, "once the other is recognized as breathing and alive, and his or her breath assumes crystalline sharpness and complexity, the breathless momentum of the first two stanzas gives way to an uncompromised openness and receptivity. Although 'Corroded Away' seems to eviscerate its own ground in the form of language, the poem uncovers as its condition of possibility the unconditional exposure to another."[19] The presence of the "Atemkristall" thus enables the poem to enact its double movement of negating a perjuring art and of opening itself onto an encounter with alterity — a nullifying logic which demands the self-surpassing of hermetic poetry from within its own enclosure. Nevertheless, the poetic act of seeking an other also involves a movement from the other's speech to the other's silence.

It is within the glacier's inner layers of ice that the word as yet unspoken is to be discovered. This state of suspension is heightened by the fact that the sole verb in the poem designates the act of waiting. The location of the "Atemkristall" within a "Zeitenschrunde" raises the question whether this neologism corresponds to a withdrawal from the continuum of time or to an intensified consciousness of it. Buhr observes that while the word "Schrunde" designates a tear in the skin, often from

chapping, its masculine variant, "Schrund," refers to a rift in the terrain. (Buhr, 43) Furthermore, "Zeitenschrunde" appears to be drawn partly from *Bergschrund,* a crevasse that separates the flowing ice below the surface of the glacier from the stationary ice on the top — it is thus a gap that comes into being out of the very discrepancy between the contrary processes of expansion and stagnation. This wound or rift ensuing from conflicting drives enables Celan to isolate the eruption of temporal discontinuity as an interval within the course of seemingly indivisible movements — a halt or pause in the flow of debris, blood, and breath.

The adjective "unumstößlich," on the other hand, subjects the other's silence to a certain dynamism in that its meaning encompasses not only "unassailable" in the sense of the irrefutability of her "testimony" but also "irreversible" in the sense of its irrevocability. Yet the "Wabeneis" would indicate that a shred of artifice nonetheless clings to the edge of silence, even as the poem moves towards the threshold of the unsaid and unwritten and enacts what Werner Hamacher describes as "das Kommen des Unwiederholbaren."[20] The poet achieves the recognition of the unsaid through the formulation of the "Atemkristall," a knowledge which shatters the deadlocked designs of the "un- / wahres, umstößliches Zeugnis." This knowledge posits in advance of itself a depoeticizing impetus that suspends its breath, whereby the poem seeks to undo the perjury of poetry's world-making hubris.

IV. The Barren Word

The theme of poetry as perjury is likewise central to Hermann Broch's *Der Tod des Vergil,* a work which George Steiner has described as "not only one of the most important novels European literature has produced since Joyce and Proust" but also "a specific treatment of the tragic condition of a man of words in an age of brute power," an "epilogue to humanism."[21] Like Celan's poetry, Broch's novel abounds with neologisms, but Celan's term "Meingedicht" fittingly summarizes the renunciation of poetry wrought by Broch's supremely lyrical meditations. For the Roman poet's decision to burn his unfinished epic in the final hours of life is born from his recognition that beauty is at one with an inhuman social order, an empire which rests on the unrelieved and unmitigated suffering of slaves. The word for perjury in German, "Meineid," resembles the coming together of the words for "my" and "oath," suggesting the deceitful subversion of a promise, to make a pledge wholly "my own" and thus no longer answerable to the needs and rights of others. Virgil's poetry of perjury has remained unmoved by the plight and afflic-

tion of human beings, but has instead been caught up with depicting mute and lifeless automatons:

> und ebendarum war es ihm niemals gelungen, wahrhaft Menschen zu gestalten, Menschen, die essen und trinken, die lieben und geliebt werden können, und noch viel weniger solche, die durch die Straßen dahinhinken und dahinfluchen, ungestaltbar für ihn, ungestaltbar in ihrer Tierhaftigkeit, ungestaltbar in deren übergroßer Hilfsbedürftigkeit, ungestaltbar erst recht das Menschenwunder, mit dem selbst solche Tierhaftigkeit begnadet ist. (KW4,145–46)

Vergil realizes that his art is guilty of perpetuating the sense of unreality that ripples through the deluded crowds on the shore glorifying the emperor as the manifestation of their collective might and as the savior who alleviates their collective anxiety before death. By contrast, the "Eid" that would undo the effects of this transgression comes to light as the vaguest of intimations. What Vergil seeks is the "Erkenntnis" of an agapistic ethics that remains as yet unformulated and aporetic. This aporia pertains to the unwilled knowledge that proceeds from the ordeal of his own dying as well as to the very limits of what he can imagine as a poet.

Virgil's thoughts had earlier turned to the figure of Orpheus, who, in his hubris, took upon himself to act as the "Erkenntnisbringer in der wiederhergestellten Menschengemeinschaft" (KW4,128). In spite of the vaunted power of his songs to change the course of rivers and make animals weep, the archetypal poet had himself also overestimated the capacity of the language of beauty to attain the knowledge of death, his failed quest for Eurydice testifying to the boundary before which poetry must always falter. Art, Vergil reflects, can come into existence only insofar as it sustains an equilibrium between empathy and callousness, which are further abstracted into the principles of involvement and indifference that characterize the alluring harmony wrought by beauty. Thus, the demonic element remains fundamental to the evocation of beauty, condemning the poet to the debilitating game of repeating its constituent oppositions, forbidding any passage beyond them. For within the confines of art and its enchantments, realizes Vergil, Aeneas would not have been considered a hero worthy of a poem dedicated in his honor had he spared the life of his arch rival Turnus. Such an act could be revered only in the language of grace, which commences beyond the realm of poetry. Orpheus had striven for it in his descent to the underworld and failed to achieve it; Vergil is likewise thrown into the depths of despair, stunned and paralyzed by the call from beyond: "ist er jedoch ein echter Künstler, so wird er zum Verzweifelten, da er den Ruf jenseits

der Grenze hört und ihn bloß im Gedicht festhalten, nicht aber ihn befolgen darf, verbotsgelähmt an die Stelle gebannt" (KW4,130).

V. The Pyre of the Work

Since the realm of art does not encompass the objective sought by the poet, the effort to evoke this outside, as in Celan's poem, involves a movement against the aesthetic as an obstacle to be overcome from within. The paradoxical nature of such a movement underscores that, for Broch, the praxis of writing constitutes a kind of ascesis, whereby the passage beyond the threshold of poetry can take place only in the form of an utmost lyricism. The illegitimacy of literature is in this sense an insight to be won by the labors of the poetic imagination itself, and the very perverseness of such a goal aligns it with Virgil's irreversible movement towards a destination that initially appears utterly strange and alien — the instant of his death. A self-resisting momentum carries over as well to the stages of fear and mystification that stand between Vergil and the understanding he seeks. For the processual immediacy of Broch's writerly ascesis allows for a conflict of meanings to be fought out in the intervals between unawareness and recognition.

When Augustus, seeking to dissuade Vergil from carrying out his intentions of destroying the *Aeneid,* asserts that "Der Tod gehört zum Leben; wer das Leben erkennt, der erkennt auch den Tod," the poet is at first struck by apparent rightness of the emperor's words. Vergil then draws back to meditate upon the effects of its truthfulness, enabling Broch to unravel the shifting meanings of this piece of wisdom over time: "War dies richtig? es klang wie Wahrheit, und war doch nicht wahr oder war nicht mehr wahr" (KW4,301). For Caesar, content with what he rather fulsomely praises as "die Größe der dichterischen Erkenntnis" of Vergil, quickly grows exasperated with the poet's insistence that his work is a failure. His statement regarding the unity of the understanding of life and death strikes Vergil with the force of a revelation, but Broch right away underscores its tentative and even fictive character, reducing the long-awaited manifestation of a decisive, revelatory insight to the level of mere simile: "Es war *wie* ein Wiederfinden, *wie* ein Wiedererkennen, *wie* eine heimkehrende Erleuchtung, und rasch, *wie* aus einer Erleuchtung heraus, war es gesagt gewesen" (KW4, 301, my italics).

Comparing Broch's treatment of interior monologue to that of James Joyce, Maurice Blanchot writes that in Joyce's *Ulysses* the profusion of "thoughts, images, sensations are placed side by side" and unified only by virtue of "the vast current of words that carry them." In *Der Tod*

des Vergil, by contrast, the convulsively totalizing reversals of values and insights taking place within the poet's meditations constitute

> a game of exchanges between the varying depths of human reality, at each instant a passage from emotion to thought, from bewilderment to meditation, from brute experience to an experience more vast, seized again by reflection — then this reflection is plunged anew into an even more profound ignorance, which in its turn transforms itself into a knowledge more deeply inward.[22]

The effects, therefore, of the illumination experienced by Vergil in his dialogue with the emperor become undone by Caesar's articulation of the unity of the understanding of life and of death. Its negating power derives not from the fact that this knowledge is itself a lie, but because it instantiates what one interlocutor has, out of sheer indifference and incomprehension, already dismissed as superfluous and what the other can only glimpse in the dimmest of outlines. Its meaning, in other words, is thwarted for the present, yawning across the void between the ignorance that eventually hollows out any affirmation of things as they are — which necessarily includes with it a presumption concerning how things will always be — and the deferral of truth as figured in the breath of an intimation. In effect, Augustus speaks of this understanding in ignorance; that is to say, he pronounces it too soon, referring to it without grasping it, thereby projecting the illumination of its meanings as the objective towards which Virgil's further meditations will spiral in the text. Broch thus reveals how the negated presentness of a phrase can take on the futural quality of a prophecy.

The interval that spans the decision to burn the *Aeneid* and the moment of Virgil's death discloses the transitional exigency of the poet's fate. For it is the destiny of the poet to inhabit the "Zwischenreich" (KW4,68), the realm between the pagan and the Christian eras, and, in dying, cross the threshold of the "Zwischenzustand" (KW4,421) to receive a final vision of "der kampflose Friede" in the faces of a mother and child, embodying the "mild-furchtbare Herrlichkeit des menschlichen Loses" (KW4,452). This liminal space of transition is crystallized by the words, "Noch nicht und doch schon" (KW4,389), which are spoken by an invisible and anonymous slave and serves as the counterstatement to Caesar's "Nicht mehr und noch nicht" (KW4,315), whereby the emperor unintentionally echoes Virgil's judgment of poetry as superfluous. These opposed terms, mutually exclusive in their apportioning of time, nonetheless make preparation for the convergence between the inevitable event and the unforeseen act.

For it is through the staging of unrepeatable gestures that Broch's writing discloses a teleological relationship to the unsayable. The decision of Virgil to give Octavian his unfinished manuscript, instead of burning it, accordingly makes up the second movement of renunciation; the poet thereby succeeds in de-creating the work, to borrow a word from Simone Weil.[23] Far more than the literal act of sacrifice, the decreation of the poem, in which the work is no longer treated as an object of the will, presupposes the capacity to perceive it in its finitude. On the one hand, the actual, material text of the *Aeneid* remains intact as the foundational epic depicting the emergence of Rome from its roots in lore and legend. On the other hand, Broch's portrayal of its author's lacerating ordeal raises up against the body of the work the luminous shadow of its annihilated after-image. This second manifestation of the work, which nearly embraces the totality of Virgil's dying, would encompass what remains unwritten in the textual effigy that foreshadows it.

Thus, in viewing it through the fires of renunciation, we may speak here of the repetition of the work. Gilles Deleuze ascribes the instant of decision to repetition in its futural manifestations. This is the singularity of the Kierkegaardian repetition of the once and for all, the "ultimate repetitions of death" in which "our freedom is played out."[24] It is upon this plane that poetry, like the Socratic vision of philosophy, accedes to the practice of dying. Broch's writings on philosophy and culture look to the standard of the Platonic idea as the basis for any universally shared system of values. Indeed, it is perhaps Broch's self-avowed Platonism that has stood as the most daunting obstacle in an era of critical scholarship under the sway of the critique of the metaphysics of presence. And yet a thinker who maintains that philosophy not only emerges from religion but also in its turn becomes the prototype of religion, and that mysticism ultimately constitutes a form of rationality, has in mind a Plato quite distinct from the postmodernist misconception of the philosopher as an ontologist who relies on analytical discourse to produce a discursive account of Being. (KW10/1,52) Stanley Rosen, who perhaps more compellingly than any other philosopher today calls attention to both the playful and the prophetic dimensions of Plato's rhetoric, writes that "in the last analysis, there is no quarrel between philosophy and poetry. But the last analysis is not the first."[25] The paradox of Broch's lyrical condemnation of poetry, no less than the sweeping metaphors of Plato's dialogues, thus constitutes an attempt to sustain the quarrel between poetry and philosophy — as opposed to imposing upon it a dogmatic resolution.

As for the idea of the end of art as an interdict against poetry, one could follow Peter Szondi in his response to Hegel, namely that the philosopher commits the staggering failure of not confronting the most significant art of his time. Adorno's remark might be defended on the grounds that he was unaware of Celan when he wrote "Kulturkritik und Gesellschaft," and that, had he known of his poems, he would have reconsidered his prohibition. Indeed, Adorno himself revisited and revised his categorization, conceding that "Das perennierende Leiden hat soviel Recht auf Ausdruck wie der Gemarterte zu brüllen; darum mag falsch gewesen sein, nach Auschwitz ließe kein Gedicht mehr sich schreiben."[26] Nevertheless, the absence of Adorno's verdict — not to mention its mitigation — would hardly have diminished the severity of the anti-aesthetic tendencies within Celan's poetry, for they are fundamental to his poetic strivings. If Adorno's dictum were amended to "no poetry after Paul Celan," it would prove more revealing of the end-points posited by recent approaches to Celan under the influence of Heidegger. This sense of Celan as the last poet underpins the thesis regarding the "impossibility of poetry" in Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe's misguided identification of Celan's poetry with Heidegger's project of a post-metaphysical philosophy.[27] It is an attitude likewise sanctioned by the eschatological vantage point of Adorno's *Ästhetische Theorie,* under which art once again becomes a thing of the past as the quintessentially modern characteristic of dissonance ossifies into undifferentiated material and modernism in its final stages becomes wholly absorbed into reified consciousness.[28] As I have tried to show, such claims of finality and gestures toward the end often become subject to the temporality of interruption; the poetic enactment of a prohibition against art may involve an irreversible expenditure and disclose an itinerary radically distinct from that of a discursively uttered assertion. What stands beyond the confines of poetry — ethics, revelation, and dialogue — defines the praxis of writing as the rehearsal of creation, but of a creation that transforms its creators.

Notes

[1] G. W. F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik, Erster und Zweiter Teil,* ed. Rüdiger Bubner (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1971), 48.

[2] Theodor W. Adorno, "Kulturkritik und Gesellschaft," in: *Prismen,* ed. Rolf Tiedemann (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1977), 26. Originally published in 1951.

[3] See Israel Chalfen, *Paul Celan: Eine Biographie seiner Jugend* (Frankfurt am Main: Insel, 1979), 120.

[4] See John Felstiner, *Paul Celan: Poet, Survivor, Jew* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1995), 50.

[5] See Paul Michael Lützeler, *Hermann Broch: Eine Biographie* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1985), 218–21.

[6] See Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, *Poetry as Experience,* trans. Andrea Tarnowski (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1999), Krzysztof Ziarek, *Inflected Language: Towards a Hermeneutics of Nearness — Heidegger, Lévinas, Stevens, Celan* (Albany: State U of New York P, 1994), Véronique M. Fóti, *Heidegger and the Poets* (Atlantic Highlands: Humanities Press, 1995), and the collection of essays edited by Aris Fioretos, *Word Traces: Readings of Paul Celan* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins UP, 1994), in particular the contributions by Jacques Derrida, Christopher Fynsk, Werner Hamacher, and Fioretos himself.

[7] Cathy Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins UP, 1996), 5.

[8] Reinhard Baumgart, "Unmenschlichkeit beschreiben," *Merkur* 202 (1965): 43.

[9] Paul Celan, *Gesammelte Werke in fünf Bänden, Dritter Band: Gedichte 3, Prosa, Reden,* ed. Beda Allemann and Stefan Reichert (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1983), 192–93. Subsequent references cited as *FPC* 3.

[10] Harald Weinrich, "Linguistische Bemerkungen zur modernen Lyrik," *Akzente* 15 (1968): 39.

[11] Paul Celan, *Gesammelte Werke, Zweiter Band: Gedichte 2,* ed. Beda Allemann and Stefan Reichert (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1983), 31. Subsequent references cited as *PC 2.*

[12] Anne Carson, *Economy of the Unlost: Reading Simonides of Keos with Paul Celan* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1999), 116.

[13] Paul Celan, *Gesammelte Werke, Erster Band: Gedichte 1,* ed. Beda Allemann and Stefan Reichert (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1983), 22.

[14] Klaus Weissenberger, *Die Elegie bei Paul Celan* (Bern: Francke, 1969), 74.

[15] Friedrich Wilhelm, *Schnee- und Gletscherkunde* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1975), 66.

[16] Gerhard Buhr, "Über Paul Celans Gedicht 'Weggebeizt,'" in: *Celan-Jahrbuch* 1 (1987): 40–41.

[17] Buhr, 40–41n65.

[18] See Paul Celan, *Werke: Historisch-Kritische Ausgabe, Band 7, Teil 2: Apparat,* ed. Rolf Bücher (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1990), 89.

[19] Ulrich Baer, *Remnants of Song: Trauma and the Experience of Modernity in Charles Baudelaire and Paul Celan* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2000), 193.

[20] Werner Hamacher, "Die Sekunde der Inversion: Bewegungen einer Figur durch Celans Gedichte," *Paul Celan,* ed. Werner Hamacher and Winfried Menninghaus (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1988), 120.

[21] George Steiner, *Language and Silence: Essays on Language, Literature, and the Inhuman* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1998), 103, 149.

[22] Maurice Blanchot, *Le livre à venir* (Paris: Gallimard, 1959), 166. Translation mine.

[23] The aphorism in its entirety runs, "Everything which is grasped by our natural faculties is hypothetical. It is only supernatural love that establishes anything. Thus we are co-creators. We participate in the creation of the world by decreating ourselves." Simone Weil, *Gravity and Grace,* trans. Emma Crawford (London: Routledge, 1992), 29.

[24] Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition,* trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia UP, 1994), 293.

[25] Stanley Rosen, *The Quarrel Between Philosophy and Poetry* (New York: Routledge, 1988), 26.

[26] Theodor W. Adorno, *Negative Dialektik* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1980), 355.

[27] Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, *Poetry as Experience,* 33. For a critique of the approaches undertaken by French theorists that endeavor to read Celan's poetry according into Heideggerean categories, see Mark M. Anderson, "The 'Impossibility of Poetry': Celan and Heidegger in France," *New German Critique* 53 (1991): 3–18.

[28] Theodor W. Adorno, *Ästhetische Theorie,* ed. Gretel Adorno and Rolf Tiedemann (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1993), 30.

"Beyond Words": The Translation of Broch's *Der Tod des Vergil* by Jean Starr Untermeyer

John Hargraves

SINCE I AM A TRANSLATOR as well as a Germanist, I should like this article to call attention to the debt that all literature owes its translators, as well as its interpreters. The reputation of Hermann Broch in particular owes this debt of gratitude to the remarkable translation of *The Death of Virgil* created by the American poet Jean Starr Untermeyer. Her collaboration with Hermann Broch on the translation of *Der Tod des Vergil* constitutes one of the strangest and most fascinating literary partnerships of modern times. Much of their voluminous correspondence, mostly in English, from 1939 till Broch's death in 1951 is preserved at Yale University in the Broch Archive of Beinecke Library.[1] Of the many women who played a role in Broch's life, Untermeyer's involvement with him is in some ways the most tragic. There are other moments in which it seems so neurotic as to be pathetic, or even comical. I will try to point out some of the high points, and low points, of their relationship. Those of us who have translated deceased poets often wish we could resuscitate them to ask them a few pointed questions. However, the case of Broch and Untermeyer represents a cautionary tale as to the vaunted advantages of working with a living poet.

I

Jean Starr Untermeyer's biography can be summarized briefly: She was born in Zanesville, Ohio to a prosperous Jewish family in 1886, the same year as Broch, and attended school in New York City. Although her family was of German origin, she first learned German in school, and did not speak it well. She was a lieder singer and a pianist, (she studied in Vienna for two years) but gave up the pursuit of a professional music career. She married the American poet and editor Louis Untermeyer in 1907. In 1921, two devastating events occurred, which changed Unter-

meyer forever. Her husband abandoned her, after a series of crises, and their only son Richard, a freshman at Yale, committed suicide. She first met Broch in 1939, (both were fifty-two) long after her estrangement from Louis Untermeyer. During the time she knew Broch, Jean Untermeyer lived in New York, though she often spent several weeks in the summer at the MacDowell Colony in New Hampshire. She suffered from a variety of physical and nervous ailments. She remained a friend of Broch's son, H. F. Broch de Rothermann, and his wife, Sachiko, until her death in 1970.

At the time they met, Jean Untermeyer was a well-known, if perhaps second-rank, poet with several published volumes. Her poetry runs the gamut from mawkish and sentimental to really quite marvelous. Her musical gifts allowed her some skill at imitating the music of other poets: her translations of Beer-Hofmann and Hölderlin are excellent. Here is a brief poem written as an homage to Emily Dickinson on reading some newly discovered poems of hers:

Hidden Meteors

How could these thoughtful meteors
So uncombusted lie,
And not discharge in silver roars
Their fragmentries of sky?

What captivated them for years,
Till Time's capricious nod
Released upon our ravished ears
These telegrams from God?[2]

This poem shows both her strengths and weaknesses in a few lines; although some lines sound stilted, overall the sound is very faithful to Dickinson, and this gift stood her in good stead as a translator. An earlier poem, somewhat wooden and mawkish, nonetheless uncannily anticipates the emotional trap awaiting her in her future collaboration with Broch:

Convert

To you no blame,
To me no shame,
If so love came.

When you disclose your mind,
So much to love I find,
Like Love's self, I am blind.

And weep and start
When you reveal your heart —
Of mind the counterpart.

But when your soul,
That sees me whole,
Previsioning my goal,

Speaks . . . then my own speech
Must strive and reach
For what you teach.[3]

In two senses, it was *Schicksal,* fate, which brought Untermeyer to the work for which she is best remembered. Fate in the form of coincidence placed them opposite one another at a dinner in New York in spring of 1939 in honor of Thomas Mann, but they did not meet until June at Yaddo, the writer's and artists' colony in Saratoga Springs. But it was also fate in another way: at Yaddo, suffering from writer's block, she translated a poem of Richard Beer-Hofmann, ("Mirjam's Schlaflied"). Though her German was *fließend, aber fehlerhaft,* as her husband said, Untermeyer always maintained that some genetically acquired ability enabled her to think in German. She showed the poem to Broch, who was a great admirer of Beer-Hofmann, and Broch was enough impressed by her poetic translation to ask her to try to translate the *Schicksalselegien,*[4] — and her success with these convinced Broch that she was a good candidate to translate his novel.[5]

After Untermeyer had returned to New York, Broch sent her a card from Saratoga Springs, where he had stayed on: (4 August 39) "All my thoughts are with you, and the most important parts of my heart."[6] From this, and from Untermeyer's reference to this later in their relationship, it is plain that their affair dates from their stay at Yaddo. A few days later (8 August) after four letters from Untermeyer, he sends her an odd memento — a corkscrew —: "so that she may have something of his." This kind of throwaway gesture of his was to become characteristic of him in the affair.

The two were polar opposites in many ways. She was American, direct, moralistic, though possessed of a healthy sensuality, and sentimental at least about romance. Broch, on the other hand, was a cavalier Euro-

pean, the opposite of direct in his personal relationships, and though charming on the exterior, could be bitingly critical and even cruel. Perhaps Untermeyer's most salient feature, in contrast to Broch, was her monogamous nature; she had a possessiveness and sexual neediness that she expressed quite openly in her letters. Broch, though undeniably needy in many ways, was repelled and revolted by this possessiveness. Yet his demons drove him to begin a love affair with her at the time when the translation began.

One way in which they were similar was their recurrent health problems. Broch's stomach problems were, he said, the result of his neurotic childhood. Untermeyer's health problems were probably worsened by the ups and downs of her relationship with Broch; around the end of 1941 she contracted herpes zoster, an agonizing form of shingles affecting the head and eyes. She lay immobilized in bed, her head and eyes in bandages, for months, in pain that she dramatically described in her autobiography as "a rehearsal of purgatory." Broch was solicitous, writing and visiting her frequently during this period. When she recovered in spring of 1942, she continued to work on *Virgil.*

In the summer of 1940, Broch had shown his incomplete manuscript to Stefan Zweig, then visiting the USA, and Zweig had pronounced it "the greatest work to have come out of Europe in a hundred years,"[7] but "untranslatable." Broch thereupon showed him Untermeyer's translation (presumably of the elegies), and Zweig was impressed. Broch sent along Zweig's letter of approval to Untermeyer.[8] According to Untermeyer, Zweig said, "Unbelievable, this is your only chance." She adds, wryly, she should have heard an alarm bell go off when she heard this.

Despite his praises, Broch did not actually ask her to do the entire book until late 1940, and then only after he was unable to get Willa and Edwin Muir, the translators of the *Sleepwalkers,* to do it. In November, after the publication of her book *Love and Need,* Broch asked Untermeyer to do a few pages of the first section of his novel, in order to show Viking Press (who had an option on the book) that it could be done. Reluctantly she agreed, and what she later termed her "life sentence" began with the first sentence of the book.

II

Their letters have relatively little material relevant to the actual text of the translation. Much more energy and space is given to their personal affairs and problems, and to the eventual reception of the work. But there are still a number of textual matters discussed in their letters. Broch's com-

ments range from praise, to suggestions for change, to occasional abusive criticism. Like other German writers in exile, he was aware that the book's world reputation would rest on the reception of the work in English, not German. Moreover, as with Mann, there was the concern that any post-war German reception might well be beside the point. He was aware of what a heavy burden was laid on the translator's shoulders, and this awareness caused him to look with an eagle eye on the translator's work. One example of somewhat tactful criticism: (September 9, 1939) Broch criticizes a couplet of the fourth elegy (and it's a good thing he did!). The section in German is:

> Und die Welten, unausschreitbar, unaufhaltsam ihr leerer Kreislauf in Schönheit, sind deiner trunken, Sind trunken des Todes.

Untermeyer's first translation for this was:

> Fate-intoxicated the circlings into the Beautiful, untraversable undetainable/Executes itself drunken of death.

Broch's reaction: "[. . .] die Übersetzung ist wirklich prachtvoll.[. . .] Ich habe bloß zwei Einwendungen: 1) in der vierten Elegie erscheint mir das Verspaar 'Fate-intoxicated the circlings into the Beautiful, untraversable undetainable/Executes itself drunken of death' nicht nur sehr trocken, sondern weitgehend unverständlich, d.h. als eine Aneinanderreihung von Worten, die dem Leser nicht viel sagen, umsomehr als hier auch der Rhythmus auszusetzen scheint." (KW13/2,140). This is an understatement at least. The final version was a great improvement:

> While worlds are wheeling, — interminable, inevitable their course
> In the vacant orbit of beauty — drunken of thee, and drunken of death.

Broch was not always so tactful. But he was occasionally willing to make changes that *she* suggested. She finds the elegies needlessly obscure: Though he replies by saying that they are child's play compared with Finnegan's Wake, which he had just received from Thornton Wilder, he does consent to change them. ("Die Elegien sind ein Kinderrätsel, wie mir ja überhaupt nunmehr der Vergil wie eine rohe Primitivität neben der Joyceschen Herrlichkeit vorkommt. Nichtsdestoweniger will ich diese Zeilen abändern und sie begreiflicher machen." [H. B. to J. S. U., September 28, 1939]) Complicating the collaboration was the fact that Broch was still writing the book, as she translated it, and continually making changes to sections she had already translated, this added much tension to the effort; moreover, Broch would sometimes use the highly unfair argument that she needed to know the entire work to do it justice,

which was of course impossible. When Viking eventually rejected the book in December 1940,[9] Broch urged Untermeyer to stop her translation until he had found a publisher.

During this time, Untermeyer was working not just from his text, but from an English raw translation of his German text, which was supplied in part by Erich von Kahler's wife Josephine and more substantially by Marianne Schlesinger[10] — a sort of general English word salad which Untermeyer would then turn into poetry, or her poetic prose. Untermeyer felt this a needless obstacle to her intuitive understanding of Broch's prose; Broch, obviously, felt otherwise. He also called in others to go over the German with her, as well as reviewing every sentence and punctuation mark of the English translation. Throughout the translation process, Broch alternated between lavish praise and pedantic nit-picking. His doubts about his ability to judge the English result did nothing to reduce the occasional harshness of his criticism.

One problem that irked Broch was Untermeyer's disinclination to follow his lead in the use of leitmotivic repetitions of the same word, a stylistic device that worked better in German than in English, in her view. In a letter of June 17, 1942, in discussing the significance of *Umkehrung* vs. *Bekehrung,* he says that *Umkehrung* is "one of the Leitmotivs of the whole book." He then continues his rant: "I am very afraid that with your passion for changing words, this violent desire not to use the same word, you will make vanish this whole technic of leitmotivs, which really are essential for the whole work." Again, he illogically emphasizes a need for her to know the "whole" work, which as of this point was not complete. She responds to this criticism:

> Sometimes I wonder why I don't put all this aside and go on with my own Memoirs . . . it is stupid as well as stubborn of you not to admit that I already know this work of yours by intuition, and it is this intuition as well as a certain skill in the use of my native language that makes it possible for me to do the translation.[11]

And she goes on, tellingly, to say, "and contrarywise, it is the lack of this intuition that makes even the cultured among your countrymen (and women) unable to discern your meaning." In the same letter, she continues her criticism of leitmotivs in musical language: "[I] have found that I could interpret your thought better by a kind of variation (as in Beethoven — where the meaning is inevitable and ineffable) instead of the deadening repetition of the leitmotiven as in Wagner." Hermann Weigand was later to make similar criticism of Broch's "jackhammer" use of certain repeated words.[12]

Some time in 1941 Jean discovered Broch's simultaneous involvement with at least two other women, Jadwiga Judd, and Fanny Colby Rogers. Her anger, shock and pain at the extent to which Broch had been deceiving her occupies many, many pages of the correspondence. One need only imagine the film *noir* scene that must have preceded this letter:

> I never thought to live through again in my life a scene like that of last night. Formerly I had to endure such times with my husband where everyone talked like mad characters in a Pirandello play . . . You have cultivated your "Größenwahn" to compensate for your sexual greed and guilt. As strong as any other drive in your life (more strong, perhaps) is this sexual lust tied to your idea of yourself as a great man to whom all should be excused. You use your charm for low ends and perhaps you will really be finally punished by both physical and psychic impotence, or you will wear out your heart by your excesses.[13]

Later in the same letter she says:

> I am going away. If I think I have conquered this feeling for you I will consent to see you in the fall. If not I will keep away from you. I make you no promises about the Virgil. I feel no obligation to you about it. My obligation to myself as an artist is another matter. I would like to finish what I start. But I shall not do it if it makes me ill. I have my own material and I shall use it, even if you are deceived by its simplicity into thinking it of little value. It is less sentimental than yours really, if less imposing. The Virgil, in spite of its great beauty, is positively sticky at times with self-pity.

A cautionary tale, indeed! Untermeyer also mistrusted certain aspects of Broch's use of language, and she accused Broch of masking his own personal "duplicity" with the ambivalent nature of German:

> German is not an *exact* language. Many words are so general and even ambiguous in their application that they must depend on context for meaning. But beyond and beneath all this, the ambivalence in your nature makes you seek the cover of these ambiguous terms. This same ambivalence is what leads you into duplicity in your human relationships.[14]

Broch could see that he was hurting her, and even endangering the project, but his own psychological problems led him into elaborate defenses and denials of the legitimacy of her complaints. For instance:

> [. . .] your neurosis has been already very nicely under control, so that kind of setbacks seem to be somehow not legitimated. What you call love and which brings you in this state of mind, is simply frightening for the object of your love: all this derives from a romantic and deeply untrue exaltation, which — of course — leads directly to tragedies, and these tragedies, even when they include real suffering and death, are nevertheless filled up with lies and kitsch. (. . .) the relationships which you have in mind since your youth are by their infantility inhuman and unbearable; himmelhoch jauchzend, zu Tode betrübt, that is the attitude of a child, . . . and children in their relation to others are always inhuman.[15]

One cannot accuse Broch of great delicacy here. Their relationship was characterized by a sado-masochistic dependency. The more he would hurt her, the more she seemed to come back for more. Around this time she wrote, "I see you as Lucifer and myself no longer even a cherub but a child. It remembers much and it fears much, yes, it fears more than it can hope, forced out of each little shelter that is seeks, again and again. Was it strange to seek it under the wings of an angel — though a fallen one." His postcard response: "If I am Lucifer, then he was a terrible worker: day for day I am on my typewriter from 9 am to 2 am. Do you feel better?"[16]

Broch's criticism of Untermeyer was not limited to the psychological: he has little use for much of her poetry, outside of her translation. In a letter of 1940, she recalls his "nasty jibe about 'bad poetry making you feel as if you were swimming in apple-sauce," In a letter of January 4, 1941, he criticizes her "sanatorium poem," written after one of her illnesses: In his memorable English, he writes, "[. . .] it is not a death-poem." Her "gifts of language" cause her to take "cheap" short cuts. "But you are not cheap enough for this kind of success. [. . .] With [rhymes like] wide and tide, with spear and dear, there is no approach to the (sic) death, it is even a blasphemy towards death, and death is therefore unberufen[17] very right when he will know nothing from[18] you and leaves you dreimal unberufen alive." Despite the harshness of his criticism, Broch did have a good sense of what worked in English and what did not.

Though Untermeyer urged him not to worry, saying, "Have no authorial tremors — My progeny always resemble their father most,"[19] Broch may well have felt an authorial "tremor" or two. It must have seemed to him that she was working in the dark, with her insufficient command of German causing her to rely for the meaning of his text on that woefully inadequate "Raw translation." She writes on July 7, 1942:

> [. . .] my confidence in the responsibility and skill with which you use [language] is absolute — so absolute that no matter what garbled meanings are handed me by Mrs. S. [. . .] I go back again and again with utmost patience until I find the clue, or shade of meaning on which the whole structure turns.[20]

Perhaps not the most reassuring words a translator could provide. But, she continues, with the "inexhaustible resources of the English language on her side" she has labored to "incorporate" his thought as well as her own "intuitions" of it, labored to "make the translation contain the exegesis of itself."[21] Just as Untermeyer was convinced of the greater richness of English, so Broch could also be chauvinistic in regard to German; Untermeyer writes: "[. . .] do cease to make those really stupid remarks about English — they make you seem to be ignorant, which you are not."[22]

III

Another obstacle that Untermeyer had to avoid was Broch's simultaneous work on his "Psychic Autobiography," parts of which he was asking her to translate for him in 1943, while *Vergil* was still unfinished. He was motivated partly by the need to explain, or perhaps excuse, his obsessive adventuring with other women by showing her how this was part of his neurosis. She wisely avoided this distraction as well as she could, not persuaded by its logic: "Your actions and your 32 pages (Psych. Auto.) don't go together. They are eine grosse Verlogenheit. Even when you talk to yourself you are deceiving somebody."[23] Broch, incidentally, could write quite creatively on the subject of his neuroses. In November of 1940, trying to explain his relationship with Jadwiga Judd to Untermeyer, he described that affair as a kind of homosexual relationship. "[. . .] there is no artist or [. . .] no worker in the realm of truth, who really was or is able to live a normal erotic life. For every artist is in the deep of his soul a homosexuel [sic]. Tolstoy so well as Th. Mann. And I know too well what is beyond the surfaces. If you will call it so, J[adwiga] as a scientist is for me the possibility to live my homosexuel trends, for science has always the behavior of masculinity: I make jokes about it, but on a deeper level it is true, that I don't like tendernes [sic]."[24]

Untermeyer felt that Broch was a bit stinting on praise — and sometimes she also lapsed into self pity: "I felt that the Virgil was a kind of penance on which I would work myself out, and for the sake of that work, much would be forgiven me. Sometimes, I thought I would die

at the end of it and maybe I shall, and that would save me a lot of trouble." (no date given).

Nonetheless, Untermeyer soldiered on, sometimes at as grueling a pace as Broch himself. Early on, she wrote Broch a letter in which she describes translating ten to sixteen hours a day.[25] Broch is addressed as "Pharaoh," lashing his two Jewish slaves in New York with a whip that reaches from Cleveland,[26] where Broch incidentally was visiting Jadwiga Judd, having gone there to escape the *Hetzjagd* of too many lady friends in New York, as he wrote to his friend Bunzel. Broch's response to this letter was a postcard that read: "your letter will be added to the Virgil edition; anyway it will be a part of your and my biography. [. . .] thanks for 1940 und alles Liebe."

Untermeyer, for her part, could also be quite critical of Broch's writing as well: in July of 1943 she writes: "There is one thing you ought to face about your style in the Virgil: i.e., that it is a style from which the young people of this time are in revolt. Take, for instance the Applebaums [. . .] they admit its dimension and many of its qualities but they do not like it. They compare it to Wagner and find it overblown, arrogant and unrepresentative of the new spirit." This criticism was in part occasioned by his unfeeling response at the translation's completion, or so she thought at the time (again, July 1943):

> The moment has come and gone, the hour to which I have looked forward these nearly three years, the high point, and it has passed almost unexpressed! I have laid this book in your hands, this book which has come to be the child of both of us, and the significance of the whole occurrence was hardly noticed — by *you* I feel empty and spent, like a woman after a dragging pregnancy, after a hard, hard birth, who delivers the child to the man who has fathered it and waits for his smile [. . .], for his words to reassure her about what? Not about the child's beauty or strength, not about the child's resemblance. That she takes for granted. [. . .] then what does the woman wait for? I will tell you. She waits for the word of recognition, the word which will bring her back to renewed life after a journey.[27]

Her maternal fantasy of rescuing Broch from all his psychic traumas, combined with her own needs confessed at excessive length, make one feel sorry for Broch. "Would to God that mine had been the strength to take you by both hands and joyfully pull you out of this swamp in which you flounder, but failing that, let it be granted me to do the next best creative thing — to send you from me without tear or reproaches. But not yet, dearest, not just yet! I could not complete my task if you ask this of me now." It is veiled threats like this that make one understand why

Broch was unable to break completely with Untermeyer. And, *mirabile dictu,* they continued their involvement with each other even well after the book's publication. Could it be because of passages like this one, which she wrote in 1946? "PS I perceived in recent letters that since you *believe* my usefulness to be over you are trying to cast me off. I let one man do this both because of my pride and my exhaustion, and it eventuated in his undoing."[28]

In a letter written in 1946 or 1947 (when both were sixty years old) he outlines the wish for a Platonic relationship with her:

> you wish to have a "human" relationship with me. I too, and I guarantee you that we can have it. But in this case we have to drop all erotic relationship . . . I live in a world in which, as in a modern painting, things have completely lost their conventional aspect. I am just on the opposite side of the fence to you. The most outstanding example for it is just the sexual realm: [which is] for you in the center of life, for me on the farthest periphery. All the erotic problems around which your thoughts are circling — not at least your grotesque Victorian problem of "belonging" and "faithfulness" — have for me the outmoded flavor of an Ibsen play.[29]

Broch would sometimes give Untermeyer the grudging praise she wanted, even if it was often hedged with qualifications:

> I can only repeat, that this translation is a miracle for me, and that also the method of the projection of the German style into English was absolutely all right [. . .], but I see again that, in spite of the miracle, a work can only be done for its own sake and not for the sake of "love."[30]

After publication they were concerned enough about reviews to track them in individual newspapers. Broch, in a jocular mood, writes about the *Christian Science Monitor:*

> The Christian Science Monitor *can't* mention Virgil, because it is strictly forbidden for these people to take the word Death in their mouth. Didn't you know this? It was *never* printed in the paper. We should have called the book "The passing away of Virgil." That's allowed.[31]

Those of us who translate can perhaps take comfort in the fact that translation can be the ultimate act of critical engagement (as John Felstiner has said), and in the fact that translating a deceased writer may be an advantage after all. In a letter to Broch of 1941 Untermeyer writes that they have been "breast to breast" again, but not "heart to heart." When she "knocks on" his heart, he turns her away, saying, "you have

not enough to offer me!" This letter closes with an unconsciously proleptic echo of the end of *Virgil:*[32]

> In the middle of the night working on the Virgil I have often felt, "Here I am in the very heart of this man, at the center of his mind; I am absolutely at one with his soul and its striving. But he doesn't know it — he doesn't know it!!" [. . .] I try to tell you, but I can't make it plain. It is really beyond words. Good-night, dear. J.[33]

Notes

[1] Unless otherwise indicated, all citations come from Broch's and Untermeyer's unpublished correspondence, Broch Archive, Yale University, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library (henceforth YUL with date of letter, where known).

[2] Jean Starr Untermeyer, *Love and Need, Collected Poems, 1918–1940* (New York: Viking, 1940), 213.

[3] Jean Starr Untermeyer, *Love and Need,* 195.

[4] Jean Starr Untermeyer, *Private Collection* (New York: Knopf, 1965), 233.

[5] *Private Collection,* 233.

[6] YUL, August 4, 1939.

[7] *Private Collection,* 233.

[8] "[. . .] there is his letter; I hope you will have some pleasure." YUL, August 13, 1940.

[9] Benno Huebsch, the editor, saying in effect that one Joyce was enough. Paul Michael Lützeler, *Hermann Broch: eine Biographie,* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1985), 260.

[10] Mrs. Marianne Schlesinger was a native German-speaking acquaintance of Erich and Josephine von Kahler. During this time she lived in New Rochelle, New York.

[11] YUL, June 20, 1942.

[12] Hermann J. Weigand, "Broch's *Death of Vergil:* Program Notes." in *PMLA* 62/2 (1947): 525–54.

[13] YUL, July 22, 1941.

[14] YUL, July 26, 1942.

[15] YUL, August 25, 1942.

[16] YUL, August 30, 1942.

[17] Roughly, "luckily, through no effort of yours." A favorite usage of Broch's.

[18] "of."

[19] YUL, June 26, 1942.

[20] YUL, July 7, 1942.

[21] YUL, July 7, 1942.

[22] YUL, June 29, 1942.

[23] YUL, n.d.

[24] YUL, November, 1940.

[25] One wonders what Broch made of explanations like: "[. . .] Along comes a word like *leicht,* for instance. "Now, who are you?" I ask him. "I told you," he says, "my name is light." "Yes," I admit, "that is your family name, and I don't mind using it when you present yourself as in the first sentence: "Stahlblau und leicht . . . waren die Wellen des adriatischen Meeres . . ." (Steel-blue and light . . . were the waves of the Adriatic . . .) but when you appear in a sentence like this — und er sog die Luft ein, um den kühlen Geruch der irdenen Krüge und der aufgestapelten Tonnen, der leicht und schwarz manchmal aus den geöffneten Schuppentüren herausquoll [. . .] — then I have to know exactly which particular leicht you are. Are you buoyant?" I ask him. "Maybe," he answers slyly, attempting to pull away [. . .] "No," I say, running my eye down the page of the thesaurus, "you are not buoyant; I know now who you are; you are, you must be, volatile. Isn't that so?" [*Private Collection,* 260]

[26] The other "Jewish slave" was Josephine Kahler, the wife of Erich von Kahler, at whose home in Princeton Broch was to live for several years. Kahler and Marianne Schlesinger, another native German speaker, were instrumental in reading the Virgil for Untermeyer and providing her with an English "raw translation" from which she created her poetical translation.

[27] There is a similar, longer letter of June 29, 1943.

[28] YUL, 1946.

[29] YUL, n.d.

[30] YUL, July 1, 1943.

[31] YUL, August 2, 1945.

[32] Hermann Broch, *The Death of Virgil,* translated by Jean Starr Untermeyer (New York: Pantheon Books, 1945): "[. . .] it was still the word: he could not hold fast to it and he might not hold fast to it; incomprehensible and unutterable for him: it was the word beyond speech." (482). The original German: "trotzdem immer noch Wort: er konnte es nicht festhalten, und er durfte es nicht festhalten; unerfaßlich unaussprechbar war es für ihn, denn es war jenseits der Sprache." (KW4,454)

[33] YUL, letter undated but probably around February 1941.

Between Guilt and Fall: Broch's *Die Schuldlosen*

Theodore Ziolkowski

EVEN BEFORE ITS PUBLICATION in 1950, Broch's *Die Schuldlosen* posed a conundrum for its readers, as we know from the explanatory letters that the author wrote to his friends and from the frustration of his publishers as they sought to accommodate the ever new stories, poems, parables, and essays that the author added to the original collection of four previously published stories. The bewilderment has often persisted. Hermann J. Weigand, Broch's friend and an early admirer of the work, wrote of the confusing complexity of this constantly shifting puzzle ("Vexierbild").[1] A mid-century English survey of the modern German novel called it "an interesting, if uneven experiment" that only imperfectly realized its aim of shaping the whole into a coherent narrative.[2] A standard history of modern German literature stated that the stories are connected only by a Hasidic parable and that, all in all, the tales "fail to coalesce into an epic whole."[3] And the 1976 *Oxford Companion to German Literature* characterized it tersely as a "tangled story." At the same time, other critics have seen in the novel a "testamentary work" that represents Broch's final reckoning with his epoch and his own existence as a thinker and writer.[4] Two of the most dedicated Broch scholars — Paul Michael Lützeler and Manfred Durzak — have gone so far as to label the work Broch's grand *summa*.[5]

The early scholarly perplexity stemmed in no small measure from the fact that scholars, alerted by Broch's own "Entstehungsbericht," were concerned with, and often distracted by, the complicated genesis of the work — a genesis that, thanks to the efforts of Durzak, Lützeler, and others[6] — we now understand in considerable detail. At the same time, however, a second factor intervened: the tendency of critics to become so enchanted by Broch's hypnotic rhetoric that we are unable to break out of the magic circle of his discourse. As a result of these two factors — and they apply equally well to the reception of Broch's three other major novels — we tend to become obsessed with the genesis of his works and

then to judge them by the terms that Broch himself introduced. This approach has led, on the one hand, to a detailed appreciation of Broch's procedures as a novelist and to a sound understanding of his thought. It has often prevented us, on the other hand, from regarding Broch with critical detachment and locating him within the larger context of his times. We look back instead at models that he himself proposed, such as Kafka and Joyce.[7] We look backward and within, in other words, rather than forward and around.

If, however, we shift our focus to consider Broch, and specifically *Die Schuldlosen,* in broader European contexts, we can see the novel not simply as the *summa* of his life work but also as typical of important intellectual trends of its time. If we ignore the question of genesis and look at *Die Schuldlosen* as a work of the late 1940s (when in fact most of it was written), and if we disregard the sometimes mind-numbing rhetoric, the insistent symbols, the operatic themes, and consider the central problem posed by the title of the novel, we become aware of other philosophical and literary works of the first postwar decade that reflect precisely the central concerns raised in Broch's novel.

I. The Philosophy of Law after 1945

The collapse of Nazi Germany and the end of the Second World War left the Western world in a legal shambles. Shortly after the war two influential works were published that represented important trends in contemporary thought. In 1947 Gustav Radbruch, the grand old man of German philosophy of law, published a widely discussed article entitled "Die Erneuerung des Rechts" which began by stating that coming generations of legal thinkers faced a daunting task: for National Socialism had, along with everything else, also left the law as a rubble heap.[8] In the name of law the Nazis had trampled underfoot the most sacred human rights along with life, freedom, and honor. The prevailing legal positivism had revealed itself as powerless in the face of twelve years of wrongs committed under the authority of shameful laws. The most urgent task for legal experts, he argued, was the re-establishment of a state of law (*Rechtsstaat*). To this end he recommended a return to the wisdom of antiquity, the Christian Middle Ages, and the Enlightenment: namely a sense of rights higher than positive law, a law of nature (*Naturrecht*), a divine law, a law of reason — in short, a supralegal standard by which wrong remains wrong even if it is stated in impeccable legal form. Radbruch's article kindled a spirited controversy, in the course of which "natural law" became the fashionable concept (Modebegriff) of the

decade.[9] Lines of continuity were established between natural law and Christian existentialism, and natural law was carefully distinguished from two familiar forms of legal thought: the German Historical School of Law and the legal positivism that prevailed in Germany and most of Western Europe as well as the United States. It was taken for granted that the essential content of natural law comprised human rights.[10] Both concepts — natural law and human rights — made their influence felt in the new *Grundgesetz* of 1949 and in the deliberations of the Supreme Court of the Federal Republic (*Bundesgerichtshof*).[11]

In the winter semester of 1945/46 Karl Jaspers delivered in Heidelberg a series of lectures "Über die geistige Situation in Deutschland" that provided the basis for his pamphlet *Die Schuldfrage*.[12] Rejecting crude notions of "collective" guilt, Jaspers distinguished four concepts of guilt: criminal, political, moral, and metaphysical (77–78). Criminal guilt results from the violation of unequivocal laws; political guilt involves responsibility for the consequences of the deeds of the state under whose order one lives; both forms can be judged objectively by external agencies. Moral guilt, in contrast, involves one's personal responsibility for one's acts, including political and military acts, and can be judged only by the individual conscience and the community sharing one's values. Metaphysical guilt, finally, emerges from the sense of solidarity among human beings that makes us co-responsible for every wrong and injustice in the world; if we fail to do whatever we can to prevent them, we become guilty in a manner that cannot be apprehended juridically, politically, or morally; here we can be judged only by ourselves. The question of human rights and natural law enters Jaspers's discussion in connection with the Nuremberg trials: he justifies judgments found retroactively under laws passed by the victors by arguing that "in the sense of humanity, of human rights and natural law" universal laws exist by which crimes may be determined (95–96).

The debate surrounding natural law — easily the leading issue in postwar legal philosophy — was taking place at precisely the time when Broch was writing *Die Schuldlosen* and the sections of his political theory that culminated in a chapter on "Rechtsprechung und neuer Menschentyp. Menschenrecht und Irdisch-Absolutes" (KW12,456–510).[13] And it was taking place not in obscure legal journals but in the most prominent cultural periodicals of the day: Radbruch's article was published in *Die Wandlung,* whose editor, Dolf Sternberger, was one of Broch's correspondents; and others appeared in *Merkur, Universitas,* and *Stimmen der Zeit*.[14] Jaspers's pamphlet was widely discussed among students and thoughtful citizens. Yet although this public discussion occupied many

of the finest minds of Germany and Europe, Broch seems to have been unaware of it: his correspondence contains no reference to the debate or its principal participants, with the exception of Jaspers, with whose works he had been acquainted by Hannah Arendt.[15] Indeed, he readily conceded his ignorance of current trends in the philosophy of law, telling Arendt that he needed the help of an expert in constitutional law familiar with the secondary literature (KW13/3,301). Confessing his lack of methodological preparation, he reported that he was attempting an entirely new grounding of natural law, which he rechristened "the rights of man." "An und für sich ist die Neufundierung des Naturrechtes, das ich jetzt aus guten Gründen auf Menschenrecht umtaufe — wüßten Sie eine bessere Bezeichnung? —, wirklich eine fast überraschende Angelegenheit" (KW13/3,294f.). Yet despite his lack of background — he says that he knows the material only up to 1936 — he claims that nothing similar has ever been undertaken.

These claims to originality in the face of total ignorance should not surprise us: Broch made similar claims with regard to Virgil when he was living within a ten-minute walk of the finest collection of Virgiliana in the Western hemisphere.[16] Nor does Broch's ignorance disqualify in any sense the validity of his ideas. What it does expose, however, is the hermetic nature of that thought, the reluctance to engage with other contemporary thinkers, the insistent claims to originality rather than to a modest voice in a larger debate. Natural law was the central issue of those years; natural law was consistently related to the most urgent philosophical issues of the day; and natural-law theorists generally assumed that natural law is the source of human rights. Yet rather than looking to Radbruch and other philosophers of law, Broch appealed to Einstein and the theory of relativity as an inspiration for his own theory of law. His principal consultant in these matters was Hannah Arendt, who appears to have been uninformed about the philosophy of law.[17] The work she had just completed, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951), draws on history, sociology, and philosophy but cites not a single legal authority — not even her friend and teacher Jaspers. Accordingly she makes the false assertion that totalitarian states base their claim to legitimacy on natural law and the laws of history: whereas, in fact, Hitler ridiculed the history of law; and Nazi *Gesinnungsjustiz,* based on the wholesome impulses of the people ("das gesunde Empfinden des Volkes"), was at the opposite extreme from natural law.[18] As a result, Arendt was hostile to the notion of the rights of man in the classic Enlightenment sense because she felt they were grounded in the natural law she detested. (Arendt maintained that human rights had to be grounded in the posi-

tive laws of existing states.[19]) On the one hand, then, she argued that the concept of human rights is further removed from natural law than Broch claimed (ABB, 94); on the other, she praised his concept of "das Irdisch-Absolute" as a genuine discovery (ABB, 118) since her own conception of laws and rights, rejecting both natural law and history, was based on what she took to be the nature of man. In sum, Broch received no knowledgeable correctives from the one person whose authority he trusted.

Broch believed that human rights amounted to only half of any proper civilization: a complete legal system would also require a Bill of Duties.[20] Human rights, grounded in such absolutes as God, nature, and reason, define the freedom of the individual; but a system of duties would be grounded in our purely human responsibility toward others and in our duty to oppose injustice. Broch begins with the assertion that punishment by death or total enslavement represents the "earthly absolute": that is, the loss of human dignity that must be precluded by any acceptable legal system. Traditional "human rights" showed themselves powerless to oppose infringements of that "earthly absolute" by totalitarianism. Accordingly we need a Bill of Duties (of the sort that Broch drafted and presented to the United Nations) to prevent future totalitarian offenses against humanity — an insight essentially identical with that of Radbruch in his 1947 article in *Die Wandlung*.

II. The Legal Theory of *Die Schuldlosen*

These ideas underlie *Die Schuldlosen,* which was written mostly during the very months in 1949 when Broch was struggling with the legal-theoretical sections of his political theory. The final title of the work was calculated to benefit from the current public interest in the question of guilt, as it had been publicized by Jaspers's *Die Schuldfrage* and the Nuremberg Trials. Initially he contemplated the title "Neun Erzählungen, beinahe ein Roman" (KW13/3,343). Five months later, however, he had settled on the "metapolitical" title "Die Schuldlosen" (KW13/3,371), which had the advantage of being "unliterary" and of suggesting continuity with *Die Schlafwandler*. As he wrote in an unpublished commentary, the earlier novel had traced the process of the dissolution of traditional European value systems, which condemned the modern individual to loneliness and isolation. And this very isolation produces the most dreadful phenomenon of modern life, the "guilt" of the new man: that is, his radical disconnectedness and indifference ("seine radikale Verbindungslosigkeit und Gleichgültigkeit").[21] Broch realized

that the new title was "aggressive" since no one in the novel apart from the old beekeeper and his adopted daughter Melitta was without guilt. But for that very reason he expected it to have drawing power, especially in Germany, where the issue of metaphysical guilt — here Broch uses Jaspers's term: "die Schuldfrage, nicht zuletzt die metaphysische" (KW13/3,374) — is far from extinguished. Indeed, he found that the title even had a certain "monumentality" (KW13/3,377) — exactly what the book needed.

Broch's deliberations, not to say calculations, about the title alert us to what he considered the central problem of the novel: not guilt and innocence in the normal legal sense but, as he explained in his afterword, "schuldhafte Schuldlosigkeit." The "guiltless" are not "innocent"; they have simply not been found legally guilty. Broch had defined this distinction quite precisely in his "Bemerkungen zu einem 'Appeal' zugunsten des Deutschen Volkes," where he characterizes three groups: the active and criminal Nazis; the active anti-Nazis; and, between these extremes of guilt and innocence, the large group of passive hangers-on ("Mitläufer"), whose indifference made possible the rise of the Nazis as well as their misdeeds: the "guiltless" ones. (KW11,435) As we can easily see, the first and last categories correspond precisely to Jaspers's concepts of criminal/political guilt and moral/metaphysical guilt.

The stories that constitute the novel feature men and women who display various degrees of such "guiltless" criminality.[22] While the proto-Nazi high school teacher Zacharias exemplifies political guilt, most others appear to be guilty, in Jaspers's sense, of moral guilt: the elderly baroness betrayed her husband in adultery; her illegitimate daughter Hildegard knowingly incites Melitta to suicide by telling the infatuated young innocent that her beloved is going to abandon her and marry Hildegard; and the scheming maid Zerline, beyond her role in the baroness's infidelities and in Hildegard's plot, precipitates the baroness's death by making a lethal dose of sleeping powders available to her. All three women, to varying degrees, are clearly "schuldhaft schuldlos" in Broch's phrase.

The most explicit example of "guilty guiltlessness" in Jaspers's metaphysical sense is Andreas, the young Dutch diamond merchant, who arrives in the provincial residence and takes lodgings in the baroness's apartment. Andreas's entire existence is based upon his reluctance to expose himself to judgment by others. During his teens his "rasende Prüfungsangst" (KW5,95) — fear of the Abitur and its examiners — had sent him on his flight to Africa, where he prospered as a businessman but, with an indecisiveness bordering on lethargy — "die an Trägheit

gemahnende Entscheidungslosigkeit" — (KW5,95), remained remote from all responsibilities at home. Having returned to Europe six weeks after his mother's death, he has drifted aimlessly around the continent until settling in 1923, almost at random, in the small central German *Residenzstadt* where the action of the novel takes place. Here, in his early thirties, he continues to avoid tests: during the drunken conversation with Zacharias, who boasts that he is known and feared as a notoriously tough examiner, Andreas predicts that Zacharias will have little luck with him: "ich lasse mich nicht gerne prüfen" (KW5,145). His indecisiveness permits him to drift into a relationship with Melitta and then prevents him from formalizing it. He makes arrangements for her financial security with his lawyer; but despite her warnings he does nothing to prevent Hildegard from precipitating Melitta's suicide. For ten years more he lives a life of contentment, shielded from reality in the hunting manor he has purchased and where he lives in a mother/son relationship with the baroness. The novel culminates in Andreas's ultimate moment of awareness of his metaphysical guilt.

The novel is filled from its title on with images suggesting that Andreas, despite — or because of? — his fear of exams, is obsessed with thoughts of laws and trials. In the first story he observes a man in a café reading a newspaper. Noting the reader's agitation, Andreas imagines that the man is perusing an account of his own trial for the murder of his wife and child. Listening to the conversation at the adjacent table, he concludes that the man and woman are talking fearfully about an avenger: "eine Art Prüfer und Richter, eine Art Henker, der sie beide abschlachten wird" (KW5,24). When Andreas moves into the baroness's apartment, he is struck by the large portrait of a man in judge's garb: the widowed baroness's husband, whose painted eyes now dominate the scene and watch over everything. Under his gaze the baroness sinks her eyes "beinahe schuldbewußt" (KW5,71). Recognizing the rank of the husband as a chief justice (*Gerichtspräsident*), Andreas learns that the judge had ambivalent feelings about the jury system. (The judge's remarks reflect the controversy about juries, which continued in Germany from their introduction in 1877 until their abolishment in 1927.) Since juries are sometimes swayed by feelings of revenge, especially in murder cases, miscarriages of justice can easily occur and lead to judicial murder: "daß auch der Justizirrtum ein Mord sein kann" (KW5,117).

The final judgment occurs in 1933 during Andreas's interview with the aged beekeeper. (Some critics have seen in the fact that the old man is blind a reference to the blindfolded Justitia; if this assumption is correct, then it points to a minor lapse on Broch's, or his critics', part be-

cause after 1907 blindfolded figures of Justitia were officially proscribed in German courthouses — though not in Austria! — under the argument that justice must be clear-eyed, not blind.) When the old man intrudes into Andreas's solitude with the intent to examine his accounts, Andreas is initially indignant and refuses to submit to any examination (KW5,256). But when he realizes that he is dealing with Melitta's grandfather, the memory of her suicide, successfully repressed for many years, resurfaces — the suicide of which he was "guiltlessly guilty." And from this moment the conversation takes on, in his mind, all the attributes of a judicial hearing. The table before him is transformed in his imagination into a "Gerichtstisch," and the object lying on it, a purse he had once given to Melitta, into the *corpus delicti* (KW5,259). When the old man puts on his woolen cap, Andreas assumes that it is the cap that judges don when they issue their verdict.

At this point the conversation enters that poetic realm, common at high points in Broch's fiction, where it is difficult to know how much is "realism" and how much is projection. The old man tells Andreas that it is up to him to decide whether or not to accept a judgment, whereupon Andreas, recalling the reasoning of the chief justice, worries that his own free will might easily commit a judicial murder on him. But gradually he comes to acknowledge his guilt. He begins by recognizing his flight from responsibility as a kind of guilt, as well as his tendency always to distract himself with apparent but unnecessary tasks. Annoyed when the beekeeper denigrates these trivial confessions, Andreas moves to larger issues: he made money while the war was raging in Europe and during the revolution in Russia. Seeing that his transgressions range from his relationship to Melitta to his social and political behavior, he attains the insight into his metaphysical and punishable guilt, which stems from a primal indifference not only to his own humanity but to the suffering of his fellowman: "Ur-Gleichgültigkeit ist es, nämlich die gegen das eigene Menschtum; die Gleichgültigkeit vor dem Leid des Nebenmenschen" (KW5,265). He sees that his situation is representative of contemporary civilization as a whole. In this visionary state Andreas transcends the traditional understanding of human rights to accept Broch's (and Jaspers's) concept of metaphysical duties: in the multiplicity of human dimensions we can find our way not by turning toward good but only by turning away from evil: "nicht mehr durch eine Hinwendung zum Guten, sondern nur noch durch eine Abwendung vom irdisch Bösen" (KW5,270). In his ecstatic epiphany Andreas rises to the assertion that he is responsible not only for his fellow human beings but for all the murders that were ever committed in his house and that are being

committed by others around him without his complicity. In his belief that he was fleeing from irresponsibility, he was actually fleeing responsibility. That was his guilt, and he now submits to judgment: "Das war meine Schuld. Ich beuge mich der Gerechtigkeit" (KW5,271). Following the old man's departure nothing remains for Andreas but his own death, which he freely accomplishes in the midst of a wilderness of symbols: at 5:11 P.M., the precise moment when he arrived in the town ten years earlier, he shoots himself and collapses in the form of a St. Andrews Cross, which has recurred symbolically throughout the novel from its opening page on. Andreas's life exemplifies, according to Broch's afterword, the kind of guilt stemming from radical indifference toward one's own destiny and suffering and that of others.

III. Legal Fictions of the Fifties

Jaspers suggested that, while criminal and political guilt can be judged by external agencies and moral guilt "in loving strife" among individuals sharing solidarity, metaphysical guilt can be rendered only in the concrete situations possible in works of literature and philosophy (78). We have observed that Broch's ideas on the philosophy of law and guilt reflect the thought of Jaspers, Radbruch, and other contemporary thinkers. Let us now ask to what extent the novel, as a work of fiction from the 1950s, should be considered unique. In view of Broch's lyricism and imagery, the work looms like an elaborate architectural monument of the fin de siècle amidst the stark ruins of postwar European literature. But in its problematics it bears a much closer resemblance to the writings of certain younger contemporaries than, say, to Kafka's *Der Prozess.*

It is a truism of intellectual history that the decades embracing the Second World War constituted for European intellectuals an "age of guilt."[23] The awareness of universal guilt — not in the crude sense of "collective guilt" rejected by Jaspers and most other thinkers — was as powerful elsewhere as in Germany.[24] In France a public *crise de conscience* was unfolding as efforts were made to explain the alacrity with which French jurisprudence had embraced Nazi policies and collaborated in the persecution of the Jews. Swiss intellectuals were coming to grips with the ambivalent neutrality of their country during the Nazi years. In England and the United States philosophers of law were seeking legal justifications for the Nuremberg trials, at which Nazi judges were being tried retroactively by newly imposed "natural laws."

It was this situation to which Albert Camus responded in his philosophical essay *L'Homme révolté* (1951), which concludes: "At the end of

this long insurrection in the name of human innocence, there arises, by an inevitable perversion of fact, the affirmation of general culpability."[25] Camus, who was familiar with the writings of Jaspers, had long been concerned with questions of guilt and justice. In his early novel *L'Etranger* (1942), he had undertaken what amounted to a not wholly convincing attack on law and the legal system for its condemnation of an "innocent" man. Fifteen years later, in *L'Homme révolté,* he displayed a fascination with the Nuremberg trials, and his novel *La Chute* (1956) amounts to a fictional essay on the problems of guilt and innocence exposed by the war years. If we leave aside the religious imagery and geometrical symbolism of the book, it displays conspicuous parallels to the central problem in *Die Schuldlosen*.

Jean-Baptiste Clamence is a former Parisian lawyer who made his name as an advocate for those — widows and orphans, among others — who seemed to obtain no justice from the courts. At the high point of his career, Clamence was suddenly made aware of his hypocrisy, which consisted of grandiloquent words and sentiments accompanied by no human commitment: he failed one evening, out of indifference and cowardice, to make any attempt to rescue or aid a young woman who had leapt from a bridge into the Seine and drowned. For some time afterwards he was tormented by a sneering laughter that ridiculed his pretensions. At first he sought to drown out the inner laughter with debauchery. Eventually, his career in ruins, he moved to Amsterdam where he now serves as an advocate for the pimps and thieves who frequent the shabby bar he favors, seeking to silence the laughter with the interminable stream of words with which he overwhelms tourists who wander into the bar.

In Amsterdam he gradually comes to an understanding of universal guilt that is close to Jaspers's metaphysical guilt and to Broch's guiltless guilt. Indeed, he defines democracy as a situation in which we are all guilty (136). At this point we come to understand what Clamence means when he calls himself a *juge-pénitent*. "I had to find another means of extending judgment to everybody in order to make it weigh less heavily on my own shoulders" (137). In a cynical inversion of Jaspers and Broch, universal guilt becomes the escape from individual guilt in a world that has gone through the crucible of totalitarianism.

We encounter another fictionalization of metaphysical guilt when we turn to another exemplary legal fiction published that same year, Friedrich Dürrenmatt's *Die Panne* (1956). Like Camus, Dürrenmatt was drawn by temperament and forced by history to the theme of justice, from his early story "Die Wurst" (1943) to the late novel *Justiz* (1985).

The hero of Dürrenmatt's banal tragedy is Alfredo Traps, the forty-five-year-old sales manager for a marketing firm. One evening, as he returns home from a business trip, Traps's car breaks down. Finding that the village inns are full, he accepts an invitation to stay the night in the villa of an elderly pensioner and to dine with his host's guests. It turns out that three of the four gentlemen, all in their eighties, are retired jurists: a former judge, prosecutor, and defense attorney; the fourth guest is the former hangman. These four colleagues gather every evening and reenact for their amusement famous trials from the past. When they have a guest, they invite the visitor to play the role of the defendant in trials liberated from the unnecessary welter of formulas, protocols, scribblings, laws, and the other claptrap that burdens our courts (58).[26] As they inform Traps, a crime can always be found (47). Traps gamely agrees to act as the defendant, and in the course of the long summer evening his interrogation takes place. The defense attorney urges him at the outset to confess his crime, warning that it is hopeless to try to preserve one's innocence (49). But Traps protests his innocence and responds cockily to the prosecutor's first casual questions. We have, in sum, a situation strikingly analogous to the crucial chapter of Broch's novel: a successful businessman in his mid-forties, convinced in his bland amorality that he is guilty of no offenses, is put to the test by an elderly man in the capacity of prosecutor and judge. Traps's trial, like Andreas's interrogation, amounts to the gradual exposure of his metaphysical guilt or "schuldhafte Schuldlosigkeit."

The skillful prosecutor begins to construct a tale of guilt from a few simple facts: Traps's expensive new automobile; the circumstance that he has only recently assumed his present position following the unexpected death of his former boss; Traps's boastful confession that he has had an affair with his boss's wife. Traps is led to understand that he caused his boss's death: aware of his severe heart condition, Traps arranged to have an intermediary tell his superior about his wife's infidelity, whereupon he collapsed and died of a heart attack. Traps is momentarily offended to discover that he is being accused of a murder, but his hosts have attained a lofty standpoint from which they no longer regard crime as something ugly but rather as the necessary precondition for justice. Transported by the euphoria of the moment, Traps makes a full confession. As dawn breaks, he staggers drunkenly up to his room, where he hangs himself on the window frame. (It should be mentioned that Dürrenmatt, in his ambivalence, wrote at almost the same time a radio-play version of the story in which Traps, far from hanging himself, gets up the next morning and drives away in his repaired Studebaker.)

In his grim tragicomedy Dürrenmatt has exposed not only the banality of evil but also the metaphysical responsibility underlying a series of seemingly trivial events. The basic outline of the work, even more precisely than that of Camus's *La Chute,* betrays a striking similarity to *Die Schuldlosen*. In all three cases the amorally indifferent central figure, who has long suppressed the memory of his own role, is brought to an awareness of his metaphysical guilt for the death of another person — an awareness so shattering that it leads immediately to a reassuring expiation: in two cases through suicide and in *La Chute* through a life of penance.

If this comparative analysis deprives Broch's thought and work of some degree of the originality that he claimed for both, it enhances our understanding by removing him from his self-proclaimed isolation and locating him within the larger intellectual contexts of postwar European thought. We can see Broch as a thinker attuned to the urgent concerns that occupied Jaspers, Radbruch, and other philosophers in the wake of the Second World War and as a writer whose work not only looks back at such models as Kafka and Joyce but also points forward to the achievements of important younger philosophical novelists like Camus and Dürrenmatt. It is beside the point that Broch was unaware of Dürrenmatt and contemptuous of Camus.[27] What matters is that Broch need no longer be seen simply as a survivor of the past looming into the postwar intellectual scene, but may also be regarded as a harbinger of the future.

Notes

[1] Hermann J. Weigand, "Zur Einführung," in: Hermann Broch, *Die Schuldlosen. Roman in elf Erzählungen* (Zürich: Rhein-Verlag, 1954), 6.

[2] H. M. Waidson, *The Modern German Novel: A Mid-Twentieth Century Survey* (London: Oxford UP, 1959), 91.

[3] Albert Soergel and Curt Hohoff, *Dichtung und Dichter der Zeit. Vom Naturalismus bis zur Gegenwart* (Düsseldorf: Bagel, 1963), vol. 2, 748.

[4] Michael Winkler, "Brochs Roman in elf Erzählungen *Die Schuldlosen,*" in: *Hermann Broch,* ed. Paul Michael Lützeler, (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1986), 183–98; here 184.

[5] Manfred Durzak, "Die Entstehungsgeschichte von Hermann Brochs *Die Schuldlosen*. Mit bisher ungedruckten Quellen," *Euphorion* 63 (1969): 371–405 (here 405); and Paul Michael Lützeler, "Textkritische und bibliographische Hinweise," in: Hermann Broch, *Die Schuldlosen,* (KW5,331–49; here 349).

[6] See also Richard Thieberger, "Hermann Brochs Novellenroman und seine Vorgeschichte," *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte* 36 (1962): 562–83.

[7] For the rare exception see Manfred Durzak, *Hermann Broch. Der Dichter und seine Zeit* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1968). But this exception proves the rule because Durzak deals exclusively with antecedents (Weininger, Schopenhauer), with models (Joyce), with rivals with whom he had a problematic relationship (Mann, Musil), and with an older fellow Austrian (Hofmannsthal). Robert Halsall, "Guilt and Law in Broch's *Die Schuldlosen,*" *German Life and Letters* 46 (1993): 266–76, speaks of "the postwar German novel of collective guilt" (276) but refers in fact only to Kant, Kafka, and Kierkegaard and confuses "collective guilt," which Broch along with Jaspers rejects, with *universal* guilt. See my discussion below.

[8] *Die Wandlung* 2 (1947): 8–16; rpt. in *Naturrecht oder Rechtspositivismus*, ed. Werner Maihofer (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1981), 1–19.

[9] Friedrich August Freiherr von der Heydte, "Existentialphilosophie und Naturrecht," *Stimmen der Zeit* 143 (1948–49): 185–98; rpt. *Naturrecht oder Rechtspositivismus,* 141–58.

[10] Albert Auer, "Der Mensch und das Recht," *Wissenschaft und Weltbild* 9 (1956): 100–110; rpt. *Naturrecht oder Rechtspositivismus,* 463–79.

[11] Hermann Weinkauf, "Der Naturgedanke in der Rechtsprechung des Bundesgerichtshofes," *Neue juristische Wochenschrift* 13 (1960): 1689–96; rpt. *Naturrecht oder Rechtspositivismus,* 554–76.

[12] I cite the work in my own translation from: Karl Jaspers, *Hoffnung und Sorge. Schriften zur deutschen Politik 1945–1965* (München: Piper, 1965), 67–149.

[13] For further discussion of these issues see also in his *Politische Schriften* Broch's "Bemerkungen zur Utopie einer 'International Bill of Rights and of Responsibilities'" from 1946 (KW11,243–77), and "Trotzdem: Humane Politik" from 1950 (KW11,364–96); and the fragmentary "Menschenrecht und Irdisch-Absolutes" from 1948 (KW12,456–510).

[14] See the many examples reprinted in *Naturrecht oder Rechtspositivismus.*

[15] Broch to Hannah Arendt, 19 Sept. 1946; in: Hannah Arendt — Hermann Broch, *Briefwechsel 1946 bis 1951* (ABB), ed. Paul Michael Lützeler (Frankfurt am Main: Jüdischer Verlag, 1996). On Broch and Jaspers, see Lothar Köhn: "'Leises Murmeln': Zum Begriff der Schuld in Hermann Brochs *Die Schuldlosen,*" in: *Hermann Broch. Das dichterische Werk. Neue Interpretationen,* ed. Michael Kessler and Paul Michael Lützeler (Tübingen: Stauffenburg, 1987), 55–65; here 57–58. I realize, of course, that future archival finds may qualify this statement; but they will not affect the argument because Broch makes no public effort to relate his own thoughts to the general discussion.

[16] Theodore Ziolkowski, *Virgil and the Moderns* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1993), 203–22; see esp. 217.

[17] On their epistolary discussion of human rights see Lützeler's afterword to his edition of the Arendt/Broch correspondence, esp. 244–50.

[18] Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism,* new edition (New York: Harcourt, 1966); see esp. chap. 9 ("Decline of the Nation-State and the End of the Rights of Man") and 461.

[19] This view is consistent with the famous principle voiced by Henry Sumner Maine, in his *Ancient Law* (1864), that the evolution of law displays a movement from status to contract and that minorities, in particular, insist on the contractual obligations based on positive law, distrusting the vaguer assurances of general rights based on natural law and status.

[20] For a brief recapitulation of Broch's political theory see Ernestine Schlant, *Die Philosophie Hermann Brochs* (Bern and München: Francke, 1971), 155–78.

[21] Cited by Durzak, "Entstehungsgeschichte," 389.

[22] On *Die Schuldlosen* see the cited articles by Köhn, Winkler, and Halsall; and Ernestine Schlant, *Hermann Broch* (Boston: Twayne, 1978), 125–41.

[23] See, for example, Victor Brombert, *The Intellectual Hero: Studies in the French Novel 1880–1955* (Philadelphia & New York: Lippincott, 1961), chap. 8 ("1930–1950: The Age of Guilt").

[24] See Theodore Ziolkowski, *The Mirror of Justice* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1997), 256–63.

[25] Albert Camus, *The Rebel: An Essay on Man in Revolt,* trans. Anthony Bower (New York: Vintage, 1959), 243.

[26] I cite *Die Panne* in my own translation from: Friedrich Dürrenmatt, *Werkausgabe in dreißig Bänden* (Zürich: Diogenes, 1985), vol. 20, 35–98.

[27] Broch wrote to Hannah Arendt in late June, 1947, that he had just read Camus's earlier novel *La Peste* and was not even faintly impressed: "ein ausgezeichneter Roman, aber so what!" (ABB, 38).

Broch Reception in Japan: Shin'ichiro Nakamura and *Die Schuldlosen*

Koichi Yamaguchi

I

FIRST I WOULD LIKE TO SPEAK of my memories of H. F. Broch de Rothermann. I came to New Haven thanks to his invisible support, like Andreas in *Verlorener Sohn* (KW5,50–83) or *Die Heimkehr* (KW6,162–96), who reached the house of Baroness W. led by an invisible current across "Bahnhofsplatz" and the "Gartenanlage mit dem S-förmigen Fußweg und Kiosk" (KW5,50/54). I first wrote to Broch de Rothermann in New York twenty years ago, since I needed his permission to use the Broch manuscripts in the Beinecke Library, at Yale University. His answer came soon, informing me that photocopies of the *Ur-Schlafwandler* would be very expensive. In 1984 I met him and his wife in the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo. We talked with each other at length. Broch de Rothermann told me stories about his father and suggested that I meet Paul Michael Lützeler. This meeting stimulated me to further Broch studies. After that, Broch de Rothermann sent me many letters from New York, always cordial and friendly. Our second meeting was in 1986 at the Broch symposium in Stuttgart. He sat beside me in the meeting hall and listened to the lectures.

In 1990 I had traveled to Theresienstadt near Prague to visit the place where Broch's mother died. The former concentration camp is a memorial park today. In Prague I briefly visited the Jewish museum near the Moldau, where I found an exhibition of pictures painted by Jewish children with names, dates of birth and death. In looking at the exhibition, I was shocked by the fact that all the dates of death were the same. In Theresienstadt I first conceived the plot of a novel, which relates to those pictures. I returned to Japan and wrote the book: *The Light Shadow of Moldau*.[1] I dedicated this novel to Broch de Rothermann. As he did not understand Japanese, I sent him the book with a German summary. He was grateful, and he let me know that his wife read the

novel. In 1994, when I received a letter informing me that Broch de Rothermann had died in the arms of his wife, I felt terribly sorry, as if I had lost something precious and irreplaceable. Broch de Rothermann was always friendly and interested in Japan, and his wife Sachiko is Japanese.

It is generally said that Japan is a kingdom of translations. So much American and European literature is translated and read in Japan, that the term "flood of translations" is not an exaggeration. This phenomenon has a historical reason. About the middle of the nineteenth century, Japan, as a less developed country, was, like China, threatened by the great European powers. Japan had to modernize and reform its government. After the civil war, eight hundred years of Shôgun rule came to an end. In 1867 the Meiji-Reformation gave birth to modern Japan under the domination of the Tennô (emperor).

The intellectuals of that time longed for Occidental civilization. Europe then was so highly developed, not only culturally but also militarily, that one of the slogans of the Meiji-intellectuals was "Wakon-Yôsai." "Wa" means Japan, "Kon" soul or spirit, "Yô" means Europe, "sai" talent. "Wakon-Yôsai" means therefore, one should possess European talent while retaining a Japanese spirit. As Japan governed by the Shôguns was totally locked up for a quarter millennium and was prohibited from coming in contact with foreign countries — which was called "Sakoku" — the intellectuals of Meiji-times wanted to translate European literature into Japanese as a reaction to the previous period of isolation. By the mid-twentieth century, Goethe had been translated a remarkable 675 times into Japanese, more than any other German writer. Hermann Hesse was second with 363 translations. In all, about twenty million copies of Hesse's writings were sold in Japan. From this tendency it can easily be understood that all of Broch's novels, including *Die Unbekannte Größe* (KW2), are read by Japanese readers.

It may come as a surprise that *Die Schuldlosen* was the first of Broch's writings to be published in Japan. This novel was translated in 1954 by Masao Asai, who is also known as the translator of Adalbert Stifter.[2] This was the first translation of *Die Schuldlosen* into any foreign language, seven years earlier than the French and twenty years earlier than the English translation. Why did the Shinchô-sha Press, which also published the works of Yukio Mishima, give attention to this novel, which was not so highly esteemed in Germany? This is due to the sense of inferiority of most Japanese in the latter half of the forties, The catchword then was "Ichioku So Zange" (All the millions of Japanese should expiate.) The capitulation in 1945 was very painful for the Japanese. The politics and

education for new democracy introduced by the American occupation force gave most Japanese a guilty conscience about the devastation caused by their armies in Eastern Asia during the war.

The starvation after the war strengthened this feeling. Some Japanese authors born in the twenties and thirties took spiritual nourishment from this era, which most Japanese would rather have forgotten. The atmosphere of occupied Japan under General MacArthur is represented in the early short stories of Kenzaburo Oe, who belongs to this generation. Young Oe wrote about the sense of shame of the Japanese, who could not retaliate against the misdeeds of the American occupation soldiers or were content to keep silent. In Japan, a country which, like Germany, had experienced unconditional surrender, the "guilt"-problem expressed by Broch in *Die Schuldlosen* was a familiar one, although Broch was as yet unknown in Japan at the end of the war. Thanks to the publication of the collected works by the Rhein-Verlag, Japanese Germanists first read Broch in the mid 1950s. This was limited to a circle of specialists, however, even though the translation of the German novel *08/15* by Hans Hellmut Kirst became a bestseller. Among the young Germanists who had studied at German universities and been exposed to the new method of German studies — it was more difficult and unusual back then — the name of Yoshito Harada should be mentioned. After returning to Japan he published an essay called *The Season of Anti-myth*.[3] Thanks to this title, the idea of "Gegenmythos" became known among readers who did not know about Broch. This book consists of many essays that tell of Harada's life in Germany. It contains articles on Broch as well as a critique of a Wagner performance and a review of Kafka. The Broch articles, mainly on *Der Tod des Vergil* (KW4), are written not just for Germanists, but played an important role in introducing Broch's novels to Japan. In the same year *Statt einer Literaturgeschichte* by Walter Jens was translated into Japanese through the effort of young Germanists.[4] Both of these books made Germanists in Japan familiar with Broch's works. Most of them were instructors of German language at the universities and colleges.

Broch's name became known to the general reading public in Japan in the 1960s. *Der Tod des Vergil* was translated in 1966 by Jiro Kawamura,[5] *Der Versucher* (now: *Die Verzauberung,* KW3) in 1968 by Yoshikichi Furui,[6] *Die Schlafwandler* in 1971 by Hideo Kikumori, who also translated the Hofmannsthal and Joyce essays.[7] Yoshikichi Furui, then a young instructor of German language, became an author and won several literature prizes. His early short stories were written under the influence of *Der Versucher*.

Owing to these publications, Broch became well known in Japan. In the middle of the 1970s not only *Die Unbekannte Größe* but also several essays, including "Das Weltbild des Romans" (KW9/2,89–117), "Geist und Zeitgeist" (KW9/2,177–200) and "Die mythische Erbschaft der Dichtung" (KW9/2,202–11) were translated with the title *Literature in an Age of Disintegration* by Masaaki Irinoda.[8] Broch's *Massenwahntheorie* (KW12) was translated in 1979 by Irinoda and his colleagues.[9] Today, all these titles are out of print. By the 1990s, Broch's work disappeared from the bookstores, although readers could get Thomas Mann and Franz Kafka in paperback. Irinoda's translation of Paul Michael Lützeler's Broch biography was published in 2002.

II

In the history of Broch reception there is one more important name. Shin'ichiro Nakamura, one of the most famous authors and poets of Japanese literature after World War II, was very interested in Broch and eagerly tried to introduce his works into Japan. His masterpiece *Shi no Kage no motoni* (Under the Shadow of Death) narrates the development of the intellectual spirit at the time of fascim.[10] As Nakamura believed he would not live until the end of the war, he wished to do away with traditional realism in the novel. In a kind of resistance to the control and inspection of the secret police, he built up the aesthetic world in his novel with his imagination. Although he was not so preoccupied as Broch with death as a metaphysical event, he was fascinated with another reality, the reality of dream beyond life under fascism in Japan. In Nakamura's essay about *Die Schuldlosen,* he used the term "double structure."

> At the time of the rise of state socialism most of the German middle class neither agreed nor disagreed with the Nazis and allowed them to come into power. They did not give support to the Nazis, therefore they are guiltless. Since they are juridically not guilty, while remaining socially and morally guilty of the crime of Nazism, this results in a double structure. If this situation is narrated with the naturalistic realism of the nineteenth century, describing the everyday life of the German citizen under the Nazis, they are guiltless. But from a worldwide viewpoint, they are unforgivably guilty. It is impossible to describe this double structure with naturalistic methods.[11]

Nakamura knew nothing about the theory of "erweiterter Naturalismus" (KW9/2,105), but had similar ideas as Broch about it. Nakamura remarked further:

> Why could authors in the nineteenth century like Zola be satisfied merely with describing the life of citizens? Because the gap between the life of citizens and the whole world was not so broad, because the contradiction was not so obviously acknowledged, Zola and Flaubert thought that the life of citizens described in their works reflects the whole world. (WS,392–93)

Nakamura explains the spiritual qualities of each person in three layers. The highest level is metaphysical and religious, the middle is that of everyday life, and the lowest is the vague and unconscious. Twentieth-century authors should describe all three layers, then they can express a person in his or her totality. In this understanding of the world not only outside but also inside the human being, these Austrian and Japanese authors are like each other. Nakamura remarks further:

> The common sphere can be sensually grasped — it is the visible, audible, and perceivable world. Besides the world of reason, there are emotion and the deep layer of the unconscious in the human being. If an author would describe the whole world, the whole sphere of experience of the human being, he must write that which cannot be grasped sensually. (WS, 395)

With a poet's instinct, Nakamura understood the point of the theory that Broch explained in "Das Weltbild des Romans," and saw that this theory is the basis of *Die Schuldlosen*.

Nakamura is a poet and interested in Broch's writing, but no Germanist, so that he also remarked: "The citizens in Die Schuldlosen are, like sleepwalkers, not awake to the whole world" (WS, 392). Nakamura had not read *Die Schlafwandler;* he used the term "sleepwalkers" in its common meaning and did not make references to *Pasenow* or *Esch.* Nakamura had Broch's method of view, which was in some way coincident with the method he sought for himself. Broch intended always to have an ethical effect on the world with his work. Every method, every theory that Broch invented is based on the ethical will. From the viewpoint of perceptional theory, the sleepwalkers are not the people who blindly support the course of history, but those who prepare to jump to the Absolute Being while wandering in the fore-dream of death and are therefore able to be awakened to true perception. Broch's will to rescue the world from the coming catastrophe is crystallized and symbolized in the title conception of the trilogy. True, Nakamura had Broch's ethical will in mind, to point out the guiltless guilt of the German citizens. But the novel of short stories, which contains Broch's criticism and analysis of the Nazi era, is the result of Broch's endeavor in the thirties to give

birth to a new myth in his works, because he seemed to believe that the separation of Logos and myth is the cause of the disaster that is likely to come. *Die Schuldlosen* is not only a critical novel but also a mythical work,[12] and that mainly for three reasons: First, this novel is surrounded by lyrics titled "Stimmen." The technique used in *Der Tod des Vergil* to realize the modern myth with the effect of lyrics, the voice of the soul, is also used here. For that element which diagnoses the age is woven together with the expression of soul in these lyrics, and so the superfluity of lyrics is avoided and Broch's ethical will is realized. Second, in the short stories of the *Tierkreis-Erzählungen* (KW6,127–221), written in the thirties, Broch describes the unconscious sphere where the archetypal motives can be found, hence the whole novel tends toward alogical abstraction. As Ernst Schönwiese pointed out, the sixth story, "Eine leichte Enttäuschung," the central piece of *Die Schuldlosen,* is considered as approaching Kafka.[13] Third, with its symbol technique, which let the triangle or triangular situation appear or vanish, this novel succeeds in overcoming its earthly bonds and allows the human being to approach the creator to a certain extent.

Shin'ichiro Nakamura does not discuss the dissolution of the three dimensions in *Die Schuldlosen*. But Nakamura tried to free humankind from the bondage of time and space on earth, also in the novel of his maturity, *Kumo no Ikiki* (The Traffic of Clouds).[14] In this literary venture, Nakamura is similar to Broch. In *Die Schuldlosen* Broch wrote the history of ordinary German citizens from 1913 until 1933, for Broch saw the cause of the catastrophe since 1933 in the fact that modern humans, having lost a sense of the Absolute Being, were fascinated with the material universe, that of time and three dimensions. Therefore the scene of A's suicide constitutes a summit of Broch's ethical writing, like the death of Virgil and Esch. Although Broch suffered from a sense of inferiority to Kafka and was determined to stop writing literature, *Die Schuldlosen* is an anti-mythical masterpiece of the twentieth century, taking its origin in the helplessness of the thirties, which also interested the Japanese author Nakamura and caused him to introduce this novel to Japan.

Notes

[1] Koichi Yamaguchi, *Moldau Gawa no Awai Kage* (Tokyo: Tokyo-Sôgen-sha, 1992).

[2] Hermann Broch, *Tsuminaki Hitobito* (Tokyo: Shinchô-sha, 1954).

[3] Yoshito Harada, *Hanshinwa no Kisetsu* (Tokyo: Hakusui-sha, 1961).

[4] Walter Jens, *Gendai Bungaku* (Tokyo: Kinokuniya-Shoten, 1961).

[5] Hermann Broch, *Vergil no shi* (Tokyo: Shûei-sha, 1966).

[6] Hermann Broch, *Yûwakusha* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobô, 1968).

[7] Hermann Broch, *Muyu no Hitobito* (Tokyo: Chuo-Koron, 1971).

[8] Masaaki Irinoda, *Hôkai Jidai no Bungaku* (Tokyo: Kawade-Shobô-Shinsha, 1973).

[9] Masaaki Irinoda, *Gunshû no Shinri* (Tokyo: Hosei University Press, 1973).

[10] Shin'ichiro Nakamura, *Shi no Kage no motoni* (Tokyo: Kôdan-sha, 1964).

[11] Shin'ichiro Nakamura, *Watashi no Seiôbungaku* (Tokyo, Iwanami-Shoten, 1984), 391–92.

[12] In regard to the mythical character of *The Guiltless,* see Koichi Yamaguchi, "Hermann Brochs *Die Schuldlosen* als mythische Dichtung." *Wirkendes Wort* 3 (1984): 181–89.

[13] Ernst Schönwiese, "Einleitung," in: Hermann Broch, *Die Unbekannte Größe und frühe Schriften*. (Zürich: Rhein-Verlag, 1961), 15.

[14] Shin'ichiro Nakamura, *Kumo no Ikiki* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobô, 1966).

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Hermann Broch, Briefe über Deutschland 1945–1949. Die Korrespondenz mit Volkmar von Zühlsdorff, edited by Paul Michael Lützeler (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1986), 10

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